614 /1/ Cancuc is a Tzeltal town of Chiapas, Mexico, whose
[101] social organization is based on exogamous patrilineal clans.
[776] These clans are intimately related to: 1) the nagual or guardian
[551] spirit, which is given the name of *lab* among the Indians of this
[613] region; 2) the native surnames that constitute the lineages within
● [621] the clans; 3) the "barrios," as the Spanish chroniclers called the
endogamous tribal subdivisions (called *calpulli* among the Aztecs
and *culibal* in Cancuc); 4) the kinship system; and 5) the behavior.

614 All the individuals belonging to a clan consider themselves
601 "legitimate siblings" /Sp. "*hermanos legítimos*"/, using the
terms that designate this class of relatives. This theoretical consanguineous kinship is expressed by means of the word *chapomal* --
a Cancuquero /a person from Cancuc/ calls another "brother" be-
614 cause he is his *chapomal*. This form of usage is indicative of
601 common ancestry, something that we were not able to clarify, as
124 our questions on this point only received answers that showed that
829 they had lost any notion of a real or mythical ancestor. Our informants invariably explained this situation with the expressions:
"it is the custom," "San Juan /Saint John/ (Patron Saint of Cancuc)
ordered it so," or "it was ordered by Manuel (God)." What does
constitute a clear concept in the minds of all is that "formerly" each
clan lived in a cave, from which its members went out in the
form of human beings to populate the earth and in which lived
the naguales, or *lab*, that bound them to their place of origin.
[775] The soul came back to this cave after death. There are as many
caves as the number of clans.

614 The children belonged to the paternal clan. A woman who
marries does not become a member of the clan of her husband.

/2/ Exogamy is strictly respected; persons belonging to the
same clan never marry each other.

[591] The clans are not local, as their members live in all of the
places and rancherias.

[178] At present the clans lack chiefs, this institution having dis-
[669] appeared about 30 years ago, according to all our information,
when the zone that we are studying underwent a chaotic period
due to political revolts.

/6 cont./

621 [551] [127] The native surnames are regarded as belonging to a definite barrio, two of which exist at present. (In an old document, which we cannot now locate, reference is made to four barrios of Cancuc. Our informants do not remember this fact and emphatically deny it, but they do refer to a third one, which became incorporated into the two remaining ones a very long time ago.) These two barrios formerly bore the names of Chejeb and Chiklajum, by which they are still known, but today they are preferably called Ajkol-culibal, or "upper barrio," and Alán-culibal, or "lower barrio," respectively. Some informants say "calpul" in referring to the barrios, but not so others, who recognize the word calpul as the one used by other native groups -- "here there is no calpul, only Alán- and Ajkol-culibal," several Cancuqueros explain to us. One informant tells us that formerly there were three culibales, the third being called Alal-bikit-culbal. The dividing line of the barrios passes through the center of the town, located on the crest of a hill, drawn from east to west, the lands of the north belonging to Alán- and those of the south to Ajkol-culibal. The [361] [368] third one, which has now disappeared, included all the land to the west of the town, as the dividing line terminated at the point where the building of the Cabildo /town hall/ is located -- to the east of the great plaza, having in front the Iglesia /church/ and the ruins of the ancient "convento." When Alal-bikit-culibal was incorporated into the other two, the line that divided them was extended, separating its lands into two parts: those that remained south of the line being transferred so as to belong to the "upper" culibal, and those of the north to the "lower" one.

621 551 Even though at present there are persons from one culibal living in the other, they always consider themselves bound to the one from which their surname comes (for this purpose our informants never took into account the third barrio to which we have referred). According to our list of native surnames, we can say [614] that 54 belong to Ajkol-culibal, and 38 to Alán-culibal. According to the division into three clans, we have the following distribution:

/6 cont./

551
● 621
614

Ajkol-culibal	Alán-culibal
19 Chik	14 Chik
13 Chejeb	18 Chejeb
22 Ijká	6 Ijká

/7/ Among the Spanish surnames we have 6 that belong exclusively to Alán- and 6 to Ajkol-culibal (not counting the case in which a native surname of the Chik clan is joined to two different Spanish surnames that are found in both culibales). The remaining 14 Spanish surnames are combined with surnames from the two culibales.

621 Today the culibal is not endogamous, but we believe it
582 possible that it was in former times (as we have found in recent
178 investigations of the Tzotzil group of San Pablo Chalchihuitán of
174 this region). The present possibility of changing residence and
551 the incorporation of native surnames originating from a culibal
(or perhaps two) that have disappeared within the boundaries of
the two remaining make the reconstruction of the pre-Hispanic
621 culibal impossible in this case. According to the data obtained
582 in our census, 62.5 o/o of the marriages were concluded between
551 persons whose native surnames originated from the same culibal.
[125] In spite of the low percentage, nevertheless the custom of marriage
[166] between people of the same culibal predominates (we should
[613] not forget the mobility permitted in recent times, because of which
residents of one culibal are persons whose lineages originate from
the other), although cases of marriage between persons belonging
[614] to the two different culibales also abound. It is almost always
preferred to look for a wife among the women of the same place
or rancheria, but at present we can say that clan exogamy is the
only thing that regulates marriage.

621 Each culibal has its own chiefs, elected from and by those
622 members who have filled political-religious positions in the
[631] Chakel or Ayuntamiento /municipal government/. The clans are
[614] taken into account in this election, rigorously taking turns. The
[651] culibal chiefs assign the communal lands, organize the collective
tasks for the benefit of the community, pray for the health and

/7 cont./

621 the harvests of all on the appointed days, and collect the taxes
622 on the lands of the culibal, which they take to the seat of the
[651] municipality of Ocosingo, from which Cancuc depends in the capacity of municipal agency. An order given by a chief is obeyed without discussion by all the members of the correspond-
[614] ing culibal. The men of each culibal participate in the local government in equal number and category, just as also in the filling of religious positions, the clans always taking turns.

/8/

Kinship System

601 Below we shall see the kinship system, intimately related to the social organization based on exogamous patrilineal clans.

601
128

Kinship Terms of Cancuc*

*This list presents the kinship terms with their significant primaries /Sp. primarios/. Some have the possessive prefix of the first person, but we have preferred to retain this form because this is how they are obtained in the genealogies and how they are heard in the common language in the forms of usage and because we use the charts of EGO, which are the ones of more common use. Due to the lack of printing types representing the phonemic signs, we have chosen the Spanish orthography.

601 ḅankil	a man's older brother
xibel	a woman's older brother
uix	older sister; father's sister
kitsín	younger siblings of both sexes
tat	father
me	mother
nichán	a man's children
kaal	a woman's children

621 361 632 [101] [171] [619]

As is the case in the highlands of Guatemala, the outstanding social unit, corresponding to a tribe, is the population of several hundred or several thousand Indians whose activities center in one leading settlement from which the community gets its name. As in Guatemala, these communities vary greatly with respect to the proportion of Indians living permanently in this central settlement. Dr. Tax[16] uses the phrase "town nucleus type" for Guatemalan Indian communities in which all or a large majority of the Indians live in the principal settlement, and the phrase "vacant town type" for those in which most of the Indians live in scattered rural habitations, coming to the town center occasionally for commercial, governmental, or festal reasons. Among the Tzeltals the town-nucleus type is less atypical than it is in Guatemala, and the town-nucleus communities are suffering from a scarcity of land. The following communities may be regarded as of this type: Amatenango, San Martin, Tenango, Sivacá, Petalcingo, and probably also Chanal and Citalá, although at least in the case of the last two, there are also considerable numbers of Indians dwelling in the countryside. The vacant-town type of community is represented by Cancuc, Oxchuc, Bachajon, and Chilón. It will be seen that both types are represented in both highlands and lowlands. With respect to this classification Tenejapa, Guaquitepec, and Yajalon are intermediate, and illustrate Tax's "Type III" in that many of the people live in the town and work their fields closely surrounding it, while many live on their farms and only occasionally come to town.

563 [664] [871]

As in the highlands of Guatemala, the ethnic distinction between Indian and Ladino is marked, here also the Ladinos are much outnumbered by the Indians, and here too the Ladinos are very predominately town-dwellers. In Chilón and Yajalon the permanent town-dwellers are chiefly Ladinos; the permanent population of Oxchuc consists of about seventy Ladino families; the several thousand Indians live about the town and in the country. In other towns (Tenejapa,[17] Citalá, Guaquitepec, and Petalcingo) a considerable number of Ladino families have become established, although in these communities there are more Indians even among the inhabitants of the town itself than there are Ladinos. A general disposition to exclude Ladinos from permanent settlement in Indian communities is most marked in Cancuc, the site of the uprising of 1712,[18] and where in 1935 some Ladino merchants were slain by the Indians. No Ladinos reside there now. In Amatenango, Chanal, Bachajon, San Martin, Tenango, and Sivacá the Indians are also unfavorable to settlement by Ladinos; in each of the three last-named villages the only Ladino residents are the school-teacher and the government-imposed municipal agent. Recently a few Ladino tradespeople have settled in Bachajón, and a "Center of Native Education" has been established there (as also at Amatenango) by the Mexican national government. In the lowland towns of

---

[16] Tax, 1937, pp. 442-444.

[17] It is interesting that in Tenejapa, where both Indians and Ladinos live in town, the two groups recognize different santos (patron saints) and there are separate schools for Indians and for Ladinos; whereas in Oxchuc, where all the Indians live outside the town, the same santos are worshipped by both groups, but the Ladinos maintain their own celebration on the day of the festival.

[18] Vicente Pineda, 1888.

a marriage was incestuous in the same sense as marriage between close relations. 582
These surnames are transmitted patrilineally. Of ten informants in Chanal, nine 551
gave their Indian surnames; the tenth said he had none. Furthermore, in cases [611]
where potential spouses have the same Spanish surname but different Indian [177]
surnames—and such cases occur—marriage between such persons is similarly discouraged. And in San Martin, Tenango, Bachajón, Citalá, Guaquitepec, Chilón, Yajalón, and Petalcingo, where apparently the Indian surnames do not exist, Villa received information to the effect that marriage between persons of the same Spanish surname is disapproved."

Indian surnames noted by Villa, with translations offered him, follow: 551

Chanal: Yemuc (large mouth), Xampil, Tiib, Calabal, Chicó, Cories, Comistal.
Tenejapa: Tzurin (sowing?), Hoviltzil (mad dog), Uacax (cow), Chacax (?), Mee-mut (mother hen), Lobal (banana), Ton (stone).
Cancuc: Oxom, Say, Chig-yax, Coreta, Caxlan-pucú, Hokob-canela.
Oxchuc: Chinbac (small bone), Aquilan (from Aquilar), Chichol (tomato), Barsen (*pinto*), Nimail (squash-tip), Holchi (deer head).

In all the highland villages information was given to the effect that each 621
pueblo (town, with its rural population, if any) is endogamous; in most instances the endogamy was represented as absolute. As some of the communities include only a few score of households, the matter requires further investigation.

The communities of Cancuc, Oxchuc, and Bachajón (and apparently only [184]
these) are divided into antagonistic sub-communities called *calpules*. (Neither Starr nor Blom and LaFarge give information on this point.) In each case an 621
imaginary east-west line across the plaza divides the northern lands of the one 829
calpul from the southern lands of the other. In Cancuc (at least) the lands of 823
the north are considered "hot," those of the south "cold," with corresponding favorable and unfavorable connotations as to their fertility. In Cancuc the 621
northern calpul is called either *muhul calpul* 'large calpul' or else *alankuluhibal;* the southern is called *bikit calpul* 'small calpul' or else *kalankuluhibal.* Each calpul (*barrio* to the Ladinos) had its own government, established by the members of each calpul independently of the formal local government, which, recognized by the state and national authorities, acts for both calpules in matters that must be taken to the outside authorities. In Oxchuc the calpul officers are one *presidente,* two *alcaldes* or *cantakines,* two *gobernadores,* two *catinab* 'very respected chiefs,'

Among the Lacandones there are patrilineal, totemically named kinships grouped into two exogamous phratries (Soustelle, 1935); it is likely that among the ancient Maya of Yucatan there was surname exogamy. Landa says (Section XXIV), ". . . the Indians consider all of the same name related, and treat them accordingly. . . . Thus also no man or woman married another of the same name, because this was for them a great infamy" (Gates, 1937, p. 40). Landa also says (Section XXV), ". . . nor did they ever marry one bearing their own name on the father's side, for this was considered a very bad thing." On the subject of Maya names, Roys says, "The Maya family name, which was perpetuated in the male line, survived the Conquest, but the old pagan pre-names were abolished and replaced by Spanish Christian names when the Indians were baptized. Two varieties of pre-names are well known: one indicating a man's profession or office, and the other, derived from his mother and preceded by the prefix Na-. The Maya called the latter the '*naal*,' and there were also two other classes of pre-names, which they called the 'boy-name' and the 'jesting name.' Many of the 'boy-names' are referable to fauna-names, especially those of birds, while some of the 'jesting names' appear to be descriptive. It seems to have been possible for a single person to have borne all four names" (Roys, 1934, p. 106). [171]

D

2: Redfield & Villa Rojas E-4,5 (1936) 1939 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

• 621 and four *chuycales*, who are in charge of sacred matters. Certain shamans, called
[756] *dzunubiles*, also participate in calpul government.

621 In Cancuc, Villa did not inquire into the matter, but in Oxchuc and in Bachajón
776 the calpules have separate patron saints and are known, in the case of Bachajón,
184 by the names of San Sebastian and San Geronimo, in the case of Oxchuc, Santo
Tomás and La Trinidad. In the church at Bachajón the santos belonging to the
north calpul, San Sebastian and two others, stand on the left side of the church,
while San Geronimo, San Manuel, and the Virgin, representing the south calpul,
stand at the right side. It appears, however, at least in the case of Oxchuc, that
the festivals of these saints are maintained by the people of both calpules jointly.

The antagonism between the calpules of Cancuc has expressed itself from time
621 to time in violence. During Villa's stay it was rumored that the people of the
578 southern half were about to attack those of the northern half, and indeed, shots
were fired. Blom and LaFarge reported "a dragging feud" in this village.[28] Apparently
[582] marriages may and do take place between the calpules; there is no
indication, however, that they are exogamous.

778 In Oxchuc a principal annual ceremony attends the transfer from one calpul
788 to the other of a certain sacred book. This greatly venerated object was, after
123 some reluctance, shown to Villa. He was requested to deliver to its custodians a
778 dozen rockets, some candles, and some incense; he was then allowed to examine
it in the presence of the chiefs and the chuycales of both calpules. It is a notebook
of twelve paper sheets, 40 by 20 cm. in size; it has a deerskin cover. Of the twelve
pages, nine bear writing, all but one on both sides. The text appears to be a series
of orders set down by the Spanish authorities in the year 1674. The book is kept
in a black wooden box; before and after removing it the chuycales prayed, kneeling,
while incense was burned and the rockets were discharged.

778 The book is called *cahualtic* 'Our Master.' The ceremony of transfer of this
788 sacred object takes place during the thirteen days beginning December 31. The
principal members of the government of both calpules, numbering thirteen, assemble
in the cabildo. The book is placed on a table with thirteen candles, thirteen rosaries,
thirteen calabashes of lime mixed with tobacco, and thirteen vessels of atole.
During the thirteen days the men remain segregated in the cabildo without contact
with their homes or with women. Many prayers are uttered. At the conclusion of
the period the box containing the book is escorted in solemn procession to the place
it occupies during the rest of the year—not in the church, but in a special hut on
the outskirts of the calpul of La Trinidad.

58 Information which Villa received from Indians of Chanal on the customs
114 attending marriage differs in a number of respects from the account given by
Blom and LaFarge,[29] or supplements that account, and therefore may be sum-
584 marized here. There are no professional marriage negotiators. The boy's parents
583 pay, ordinarily, four visits to the girl's parents to complete the agreement. On
000 each visit they bring bread, eggs, fruit, and especially rum. The boy is expected

---

[28] Blom and LaFarge, 1927, 2:387.

[29] *Ibid.*, 2:358–358.

[P.455-A)

Death as a Way of Life: The Increasing Resort to Homicide in a Maya Indian Community[1]

JUNE NASH
Yale University

105 *The breaking-down of a social-control system based on belief in the guardianship of the spiritual ancestors and their temporal agents, the curers, is reflected in a rising homicide rate as people turn to individual sanctions when threatened. The acts of homicide differ in their social significance according to who is killed, the context, the agency, and the motivation of the killer. Thirty-seven homicides between 1938 and 1965, analyzed in terms of these component variables, reflect the conflicts arising from competition in new economic enterprises, the rising suspicion of curers' abuse of their supernatural power, and the loss of belief in the guardianship of the ancestors.*

121 682 [762] THE social impact of homicide has caused some analysts[2] to treat it and its supposed inverted complement, suicide, as one kind of behavior with a single meaning, ignoring Durkheim's caveat that behavioral rubrics categorize diverse phenomena. Here I shall [101] analyze the variety of strategies involved in killing in a Mexican community, which I shall call Teklum (the Tzeltal term for village), and endeavor to show how rules of behavior are expressed in killing and in attempts to avoid being killed. Further, I shall endeavor to point out what these indicate about structural and organizational changes both within the community and in its relations with the wider society. Since suicide is absent, except for a [762] single case of a madman, I have restricted my enquiry to homicide.

161 162 [101] ● 621 Teklum is a predominantly Indian township of Mexico. The population of the town center—about 1,900—includes only one Ladino, or non-Indian, family, that of the schoolteacher. The sense of community is limited to people living in the center and in the four nearby hamlets (*barrios*).

621 632 The town center is divided physically and socially into two endogamous sections, called "upper" and "lower." The outlying hamlets are linked to the nearest section by social and 621 632 178 economic ties. The civil and religious posts of the town are, in local theory, apportioned evenly between the sections. This was in fact true until the 1950's; for each of the ranked posts had a paired complement, so that both sides of the dual division were represented, and the single posts of president and *sndico* (the president's administrative assistant) were al-

621
632
178
ternated for each three-year term between the upper and lower sections.

621
632
178
554
But with the recent increase in dealings between the national and regional administrative centers and the local communities, recruitment into office as president and síndico has come to depend upon the candidates' possessing a knowledge of Spanish, literacy, and familiarity with the ways of Ladino society. Because of the relative scarcity of such skills, selection of these two officials has tended to ignore the former residence requirements relating to the dual division. [887] Along with this change in the criteria for selecting these officials has come a decrease in the power and the authority exercised by the *principales*—elders from each side of the dual division who rose to their position by passing through all of the lower offices in the hierarchy—and a corresponding increase in the importance of the presidency.

621
632
754
756
This dual division also affected the structure of the curing profession. The curers are men who can overcome sickness caused by witchcraft because of their possession of an animal spirit (*swayohel*) and their knowledge of ritual. In each of the two sections of the town was a leading curer (*statal ʔuʔul*) who, by virtue of his age, experience, and recognized authority, was able to control entry into the profession. Their function was to prevent as well as cure, for the leading curers were also charged with guarding their section against the entry of witchcraft.

621
632
756
178
In the last two decades, leadership by recognized elder curers from each side of the dual division has been lost, and along with it control over limiting the practicing of curing.

121
621
632 It is in the context of these structural divisions that social change and its behavioral indices must be analyzed.

682
182 Homicide—an act viewed as a delict in national Mexican law—has in the past two decades become an accepted strategy in social interaction. It is part of the expectations of the society upon which members predicate their own code of behavior and in terms of which [626] they react to others. Gossip not only fails to [521] suppress homicide, but serves to create a consensual base for condoning it. The corpse is re- [764] ferred to as "the one who had the guilt," *ʔa stukel smul*, and even when knowledge of the particular act is lacking, certain assumptions are made: the killer was someone in the community; the victim provoked the killer. In list- 682 ing crimes, informants sometimes failed to 674 mention killing, or they included it after wi[illegible]craft, theft, or adultery. Homicide is [124] [illegible]sidered a *reaction* to crime, not a crime in i[illegible].

The rate is phenomenally high—up to 2[illegible] per 100,000 (when adjusted to bring the whole township's population of a little over 3,000 to the base for measuring international rates)—and it is increasing. This compares with national rates of 4.8 for the United States, 31.9 for Mexico (United Nations Demographic Yearbook 1964), and 36.2 for a nearby town (Favre 1964).

The following tabulation summarizes the homicides by decades since 1915, the earliest date for which records are available.

1915–1924	4
1925–1934	5
1935–1944	19
1945–1954	9
1955–1964	35

[114] Figures prior to 1950 are not apt to be accurate, for only since that time have there been adequate reporting and checking of township records. In the following tabulation, the marked increase in the annual number of homicides since 1960 represents a real increase.

1950	1	1958	1
1951	0	1959	1
1952	1	1960	4
1953	1	1961	7
1954	1	1962	6
1955	0	1963	7
1956	1	1964	4
1957	4	1965	9

682 In order to assess the meaning of its remark-
674 able increase during the 1960's, I have pro-
121

682
674
656
long, and that the body was suspended 35 centimeters from the ground. He saw that we had raised the act well, and nothing was done.

682
562

Who Kills and Why

The only universal factor among the killers is sex—only men kill (Table 2). Women do not kill nor are they killed in Teklum. This does not mean that they are not subject to as many tensions or abuses as men, or that these have no channels for expression. Women work through men by agitating them to homicide. [593] Sometimes revenge is delayed, for the agents chosen by women may be children who must reach maturity before accomplishing the deed (see case 36, in which the son's animosity toward his father was kindled at his mother's deathbed).

682
683
621
Neighbors are a significant group in witchcraft killing. (Neighbors may be listed in Table 2 under another relationship, for instance as brother-in-law or as cattle owner.) They are the informal judges of suspected witches, and it is frequently they who kill a man considered to be a witch. When the curers accuse a man of causing epidemics, his neighbors are usually the executors. [608] For this reason, most people try to neutralize the hostility of

682 683 their neighbors by establishing *compadrazgo*, or
godparental, relations with them.

621 608 Ten of the 37 homicides here reported were
committed by immediate consanguineal or
682 affinal relatives of the victim. The high fre-
quency of killings involving brothers or
593 brothers-in-law (8 cases) suggests a locus of
607 high tension in these relationships. Male
[602] siblings, the *yermanotak*, comprise the closest
cooperating group. Cooperation between
[476] brothers is obligatory when wheat is to be
threshed, a house built, or a roof rethatched. If
a brother or brother-in-law is unavoidably
absent, he must pay a substitute. Brothers, or
sons and fathers, are the only relationship
pairs who work the milpa in common and share
[428] the harvest. Bilateral inheritance, with equal
division of land and house to both male and
female offspring, means that brothers-in-law
are potentially equivalent in the competition
for goods as well as in their obligation to co-
operate. A man kills his sister's husband if the
husband is abusive to the woman or to mem-
682 bers of the family (two cases). The brother
627 figures not only as a lethal opponent, but also
593 as the man who avenges one's own death (case
18, Table 1). When someone has been killed
for witchcraft, his brothers are expected to ac-
cept the verdict or to avenge the
killing.

[Text continues on p. 463-A]

[P. 466-B]

> 626 178 756 orders the curers to gather together. The curers look for the man who has "brought the heat." And then they kill him. Formerly it was not so.

The statement points to two interacting features of change within the curing profession: (1) the loss of leadership and of control over entry into the profession and (2) the loss of faith in the guardianship function of the curers. The effect of these changes has been to reduce security and the maintenance of social control.

756 178 ●[621] Formerly the recognized leader of the curers in each section of the dual division legitimized entry of new curers and expelled those who abused their power. When these curers died, there was no one of sufficient power to replace them. In listing curers who are active today, there is no agreement as to who the leading curers are or even as to whether there are leaders.

756 Loss of leadership in the curing profession has led to competition among the curers. There is discussion such as the following concerning who is the strongest:

> When N (a former curer, killed as a witch) was alive, he was land-control officer. When we were half drunk one day, the president asked him: "Tell me who is the strongest of all you who know curing." N replied, "Ah, you want to hear. There is no one who is very strong, only the dead Mamal K and myself." The president said, "But Mam D is good." N said, "Less so. I know because one time we proved it, at a meeting of the curers. I arrived as a sheep, and 'took out' [literal translation of *šlok*'] one black dog. He took out a sheep and a pig and ordered them to run. And I saw that they could not run. After my animals ran a little with his, mine arrived first. It is thus that I saw his were less strong."

[541] The present competition among the curers to assert their power by telling such stories or by displaying fearlessness in the bullfights held in community fiestas is symptomatic of the disruption caused by the breakdown in the hierarchy of the profession. When curing was a controlled profession, abusive conduct by the curers was minimized, but the new curers are reputed to use their power for their own gain. The following story is typical:

> 756 539 J, born in Tetikil, went to live in hot country. A friend invited him to drink. J, who was reputed to be a curer, said to his friend when they were half drunk, "Do you want to 'take out' a girl?" His friend said, "No, how can you?" "*Pendejo!*" J replied, "I can because I have an animal

756
578
682 accused him of being a witch, he was put in
683 the local jail by the judge and then removed to
756 the departmental capital. During his term of
754 imprisonment an epidemic broke out in the
682 town; it was attributed to witchcraft sup-
683 posedly practiced by him and by two other
578 curers who remained in town. These two were then imprisoned. After they were set free, all three men were killed in different episodes involving accusations of witchcraft. Permission to act as executioners was granted by the civil authority.

178 In the past, the public review of a case before
682 a killing probably served to minimize homi-
754 cide, since permission was not always granted.
627 Since 1953, when a large highway first linked
[491] the town to the departmental capital and communication between this center of justice and the local township increased, the civil authority has not given permission, and prior review of witchcraft cases occurs only with epidemics.

756 The final incident in which the civil author-
754 ity confronted the curers occurred in the spring
578 of 1966. The president accused one of the
627 curers of cutting short his life by lighting candles in the mountains. The curers were called together to hear the threat and to go to the hill to look at the evidence. The accused curer remained at home pleading that he was sick. He was warned not to pursue his witchcraft, and as yet there has been no use of
[178] violence on either side. This open confronta-
[622] tion without the use of violence may indicate a change in the strategy of conflict with the growing power of the president.

756 (J) *Breakdown of the dual division*. The loss
178 of internal controls in the curing profession
578 and the conflict for power and control by the
621 civil officials and the curers are related to a
626 more fundamental change in the social structure of the community. Formerly the division of the town into two sections provided a channel for opposition as well as cooperation. Recruitment into leadership positions in both the civil hierarchy and the curing hierarchy was based upon residence. The system provided checks and balances in the exercise of power, for the two principales—one from each section of the dual division—were supposed to act as watchdogs over the curers. The shift in the locus of social control from the principales to the president has been marked by the open confrontation with the curers.

000 The authority of the president, however,

[P. 469-A]

682
183
wider ranges of expression than are usually permitted in the community prompt men to assert the strength of their swayobel, to run races with the animal spirits of others in the assertion of pre-eminence, to boast of their material goods, and to "wake up dead."

682
674
178
578
The increasing rate of homicide is related to the following changes in the community:

(1) Increasing friction resulting both from the introduction of new economic enterprises and from political competition by the recently settled land-reform colonies has introduced a new kind of homicide, in which an opponent is killed either by the person whose interests are threatened or by hired killers. It has also stimulated accusations of witchcraft stemming from envy. [754]

558
682
674
178
578
756
(2) The curers' loss of leadership and of control over entry into the curing profession has led to competition among them and to a loss of respect for their ability to overcome witchcraft. Curers have become the most frequent suspects of being witches.

754
682
674
178
769
776
626
(3) Loss of faith in the guardian ancestors and in the guardianship functions acquired from them by the curers has further undermined the position of the curers as agents of social control. This has aggravated the sense of insecurity and fear, which provokes the uncontrolled use of individual violence.

682
674
178
621
622
756
(4) The shift of power from the principales to the town president has led to a breakdown in the system of checks and balances exerted by the principales over the curers, and to a direct confrontation of the curers by civil officials.

682
674
756
178
626
683
(5) In the confrontations of the civil authorities and the curers in the '40's and early '50's, the fact that a witchcraft case was officially reviewed and the killing of the witch sanctioned may have served as a brake on the number of such homicides. Since 1953, when this practice was abandoned, those who have felt themselves or their families to be the victims of witchcraft have been left to their own recourse.

178
578
682
[621]
[632]
[756]
The organizational changes summarized here are provoked by structural changes affecting recruitment into the positions of power and the validation of leadership in the exercise of power. The dual division of the town provided an accepted basis for recruiting

[P.469-B]

178 leaders, both in the civil authority and in the
528 curing profession. The transition from the old
682 hierarchy of control to the new leadership
621 structure is still in process. In the most recent
632 confrontation of the civil authority and curers,
756 the fact that neither side resorted to violence
suggests the transitional nature of homicide
as a solution in intracommunal conflict.

178 This study of homicide indicates that the
682 changing rate of behavior points to structural
change, but does not in itself indicate what
kind of change occurs or from what motives
it stems. Qualitative case analysis related to
[121] structural changes within the recall of informants is essential for understanding social process.

NOTES

114 [1] Field work is based on two periods of residence in the com-
122 munity in 1964 and 1965; it was supported by the National In-
128 stitute of Mental Health. I am grateful for comments by Paul Friedrich, Richard Henderson, Harold Scheffler, and Peter Wilson, who have improved the original version read at the 1965 meetings of the American Anthropological Association. I remain responsible for the contents of the paper.

114 [2] Henry and Short (1954:18) analyze both suicide and homi-
682 cide as undifferentiated aggressive reactions to frustration, the
762 rates of which vary—in the first case inversely and in the second case directly—with the strength of the external control system over behavior. Their assumption that homicide is motivationally a single phenomenon, and not an expression of a variety of motives, stems from the assumption that all cases of aggressive acts are the result of frustration. Straus and Straus (1964:587) apply a similar correlational analysis of homicide and suicide rates with structural features of society in Ceylon, but come to opposite conclusions. They maintain that one would expect greater evidence of homicide in a "loosely structured society," by which they mean one with considerable sanctioning of variation in individual behavior. These studies contradict each other in the conclusions that they reach by similar analytical processes, but they are attempts to move away from such psychoanalytic reasoning as the death-wish theory.

128 [3] Bohannan's (1960) survey of homicide and suicide in African
682 societies represents a useful model for comparing the total pattern of homicide cross-culturally. In presenting the case material here, I have used a similar format, adding to it the circumstances surrounding the killing. In the analysis of these materials, I have diverged from Bohannan's model in trying to demonstrate the linkage among the components—the ratios, to use Burke's (1945) terminology of scene/setting/actor/agent.

192 [4] The term "witch" is a translation of the Tzeltal term *ʔak'-*
754 *čamel*, literally "giver of sickness." The term "curer" is a trans-
756 lation of *ʔuʔul*. The power to cure and to give sickness stems from the possession of a *swayohel*, or animal spirit.

[5] For a discussion of the tactics of gaining consensus in witch-
000 killings, see Manning Nash (1960).

[6] Political homicide by agrarian leaders, which is so frequent in
578 the central plateau (Friedrich 1962), is a relatively recent phe-
423 nomenon in the retreat zones of Indian population. The cases
668 analyzed by Friedrich are a strategy of political power stemming
682 from a revolutionary background, and the cultural assumptions to which he points contrast with those underlying witch-killings. My only comparable case is, significantly, found outside the traditional center, in the new ejido colony.

000 [7] Jules Henry (1936) sees the formula of fear and anger as the

Their slenderness is deceptive, for their great strength lies 147 [482]
in their legs, back, and neck, seen in their ability to carry loads of 45 kilograms (100 lbs.) and upwards, all day up and down hill without undue fatigue . . . Hair form is straight, coarse, and black. Gray hair or baldness are very unusual. Body hair, as far as could be observed, is negative. 142

143 As many as 99.56 per cent of Tzeltal belong to blood type O, which is one of the highest frequencies registered in the Mayance area. According to Matson and Swanson (1959, p. 50), "In general the more isolated peoples such as the Lacandon, Tzeltal, Tzotzil and Cakchiquel show the highest frequency of the O gene." This condition is attributed to the absence of racial mixture. 143 144

Cultural Configuration

● 621 [171] Like the Indians in the highlands of Guatemala (Tax, 1937), the Tzeltal group themselves in communities which are distinct social and cultural units, as is characteristic of the tribe. Each community has its well-defined lands, its own dialect forms, wearing apparel, kinship system, politico-religious organization, economic resources, crafts, and other cultural features. Any native of the region finds it easy to identify the origin of other Indians by noting their speech, wearing apparel, or the goods they sell. Solidarity between the members of each community is strong and becomes manifest in times of conflict with outside groups or in their way of gathering according to their "nationality" on fiestas or market days when people of other communities attend. On the other hand, no ethnic solidarity whatsoever exists. Each community restricts itself to its own affairs and nothing else; whatever happens to the other Tzeltal communities is something altogether apart. 621 184 621 [628]

621 632 [171] The territorial limits of these communities do not always coincide with those of the municipalities, as in Guatemala. Various well-defined communities exist (in the terms described above) which belong to

[P 197-A]

621
632 other municipalities (Aguacatenango, Cancuc, Tenango, San Martin, Sivaca, Guaquitepec, and Bachajon). Petalcingo belongs to the municipality of Tila, where Chol is spoken. The reason for these heterogeneous municipalities is that, within the political constitution of the state, only communities containing a sufficient number of inhabitants may achieve the status of municipality; the rest are considered merely as agencies of the municipality to which they have been assigned.

18
177
191
361 Another cultural variation stems from its ecological location. Communities of the southern zone, which have good lands, roads, mechanized transportation, and therefore greater contacts with the outside world, occupy a more advanced place in the process of acculturation, which is revealed by the scant number of monolingual Indian residents and by their better economic condition. Communities of the central zone, of irregular landscape and high demographic pressure, isolated, and without economic opportunities, are the poorest, most conservative, and most untrusting of the entire region. The northern zone has a high index of Indianness because of the number of those who do not know Spanish, but their economic condition is better than that of the central zone, because there is more opportunity to cultivate coffee and work on the plantations.

HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS

175
177
648 I shall mention only the periods of greatest social significance in the past four centuries. The dates are approximate.

The period of the conquest, from 1524 to 1545, saw the most violent encounters and occasional skirmishes between Indians and Spaniards. The fortress of Chamula was taken by Captain Luis Marín in 1524, and four years later Ciudad Real (now San Cristobal de las Casas), destined to be the politico-religious center of the region, was founded.

The period of catechization and consoli-

241 782 796 [778] [177] paraje perform before the altar of the church in the ceremonial center. All prayers are said in Tzeltal; some are Christian in origin, others entirely pagan. This prayer I recorded in 1944:

> 241 796 782 539 [534] Here we come to bring you your food, to light your candles, to play the harp, to play the guitar. Here we come to perform your fiesta, so you may be happy, so you will not abandon us.
>
> We have already planted the milpas; the seed is already in the soil. Father, do not forsake us; let the rains come properly; let them not be abundant nor deficient. Let there be a little sunshine and a few clouds. Let the soil be happy.
>
> Father, let no hail come; let no wind come; let no locust come; let no harmful animals come; let no robbers come, lest they steal from us and leave us in poverty.
>
> Father, let the year come well; let the corn turn out well; let the beans turn out well. Let there be no sickness; let there be no sorrow. Father, the mouthful has already entered; the word had already entered.

The word "mouthful" refers to all the gifts, "word" to all the prayer.

796 [621] [776] [622] [534] A similar ceremony is the *mukul mixa* ('great Mass'), organized by members of each calpul. Each calpul has its own patron saint and its own chiefs. For this ceremony many more people gather, for representatives and musicians (flute, drum, harp, and guitar) come from all places. The candles offered as "mouthfuls" are greater in number and size.

778 78 [834] Household ceremonies follow as the head of the household, in private, prepares the small home altar, where the cross which protects the home is always found. He adorns it with *juncia* and five candles; he says appropriate prayers at 6 o'clock in the morning or at midday, as he observes fasting and sexual abstinence. These family prayers may be repeated occasionally, depending on the condition of the milpa.

241 782 At the beginning of the month called

[P. 202-A]

177 262 ious meats, and canned foods such as salmon, sardines, and sausages.

231 [222] The keeping of bees is not widespread. The Indians instead take advantage of the wild honey, which is commonly gathered during certain parts of the year. Tenango was the only town where I observed beehives next to the huts. The bees, large and yellow, are called *aja-chab* and are brought from the woods. When a tree is found with one of these beehives, the section containing the hive is cut off and is taken to town; the ends of this section are covered with jícaras, which are stuck on with clay.

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

Town and Parajes

632 621 361 All the communities consist of a town center and a number of settlements, called parajes, which are scattered over the municipio. The town is the political, religious, and commercial center of the entire community; there the municipal authorities have their offices, [563] and the church and shops are located. In general, the Ladinos reside in the center, their houses arranged in aligned streets, but some communities (Chanal, Amatenango, Aguacatenango, Cancuc, Bachajon) refuse to accept Ladinos in the town permanently. The Indians prefer the parajes, where the huts are dispersed irregularly.

162 As observed by Sol Tax for the highlands of Guatemala (1937), the proportion of Indians who reside in the town center varies. In some communities (Chanal, Aguacatenango, Cancuc, Tenango) nearly all the people live in the capital. In Chanal, with a population of 2,881 persons, 2,386 reside in the center and so it is a "nucleated town," according to Tax's terminology. In contrast, the most common community is the "vacant town." Tenejapa, for example, has only 517 inhabitants of a total 7,750 residing in the center. The least frequent is an intermediate type, where some live in the center and some in the parajes, as typified by

[P. 203-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 205-A]

162 Amatenango del Valle, a community of 3,529 inhabitants, of which 1,470 reside in the town center.

621 The town centers are divided into two sections, called barrios by Ladinos and calpules by Indians (Oxchuc and Cancuc). The imaginary line which separates one barrio from another passes through the center of the town, sometimes east-west, sometimes north-south, with no fixed orientation.

[776] Each barrio has its own local authorities and sometimes its own patron saint (Oxchuc and Bachajon). The principal function of the barrios was not only political or religious but also social, in regulating marriage. Endogamy was common to all barrios, but today that rule is losing its rigidity. [178] In Aguacatenango, B. Metzger (1960, p. 8) tells us that, "The rule of barrio endogamy, which is viable in 86% of the known marriages, contributes to the localization of related families limiting the geographical range of marriage choice." A similar situation obtains in Amatenango (J. Nash, 1959, p. 3), Cancuc (Guiteras Holmes, 1947, p. 7), and Bachajon (Guiteras Holmes, 1961c, p. 167).

[178] In Bachajon, Guiteras Holmes states that: "In the old days there was no marriage between the *barrios*. [578] If a boy from San Sebastian took a walk through San Geronimo, he was beaten; they would give him a '*maciza*,' as they say. If a boy from a *barrio* approached the waterholes to court a girl, he fared very badly." The calpules of Oxchuc, although they have politico-religious significance, have no influence at all in the selection of wives.

621 778 [361] The parajes have a few scattered huts among the cultivated fields. Each paraje is bound by religious ties to a given cave where a cross, the supreme sacred symbol, is kept. The name of the paraje is generally taken from the name of the cave. Sacred caves of secondary importance also exist. 778 821 823 This mystical regard for caves is based in the belief that they are the place from which issues the lightning to punish the

[P 205-A]

778 natural elements (hail, wind, storms),
821 which often threaten and destroy the corn-
823 fields.

Distribution of Huts

621 In the parajes as well as in the centers the tendency to cluster huts in patrilineal nuclei is strong. One perceives this tendency also where lineage or clan ties still persist (Oxchuc).

[594] The majority of households consist of
the elementary family, a couple and their
342 offspring. The habitations include a hut,
343 which serves as dormitory and kitchen, plus
[417] chickencoop, pigpen, and, sometimes, the
temascal (*pus*) used for steam baths.
343 Among industrious families another small
hut serves exclusively as a kitchen. Seldom
417 does a fence separate this nucleus from its
neighbors, but it may protect a vegetable
patch from animals. In the capital, however,
each family must fence its lot.

Relationships between Communities

628 Communities establish commercial and other ties according to their ecological distribution and cultural condition. In the southern zone, Amatenango and Aguacatenango form a kind of unit, based on physical proximity and cultural affinity. Their residents meet frequently at the Sunday market of Teopisca. In the central zone, Oxchuc, Tenejapa, Cancuc, and Tenango, which more or less share ways of life and natural environment, form another informal association, contacts resulting from the weekly markets of Tenejaya and Yochib. In the northern zone, Sitala and Guaquitepec form another unit. Ocosingo, Chilon, and Yajalon are centers of commercial and political importance, occupied largely by Ladinos but used as trade centers by Indians throughout the northern zone.

412 TECHNOLOGY

Tools and Techniques

Farming tools are the most important: axe

[P 205-B]

407

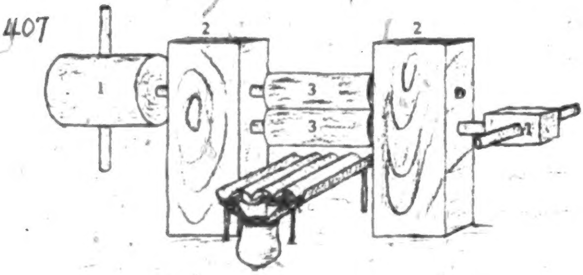


Fig. 6—SUGARCANE PRESS.
1, Kabal-té. 2, Smete-al. 3, S-kab.

184
608 their godchild nor protect him if he be-
736 comes orphaned, but this is only because
431 closer members of the same lineage take
608 care of him. But the padrinos must attend
764 the wake (*kanka-almail*) and the burial
when the godchild dies, as is expected from
the godchild when the godparents die. In
608 these communities, compadrazgo consti-
182 tutes both an important religious obligation
and a means of establishing friendship and
cooperation between families.

Political and Religious Organization

621 The political and religious patern is the
631 same throughout all the Tzeltal communi-
[184] ties, governed by two groups of authorities
whose activities are interrelated. The first
group, formed by members of the cabildo
and ayuntamiento, manages political affairs
of the community. The ayuntamiento main-
tains relationship between the local gov-
631 ernment and the national authorities. The
presidente municipal and the intermediate
authorities are popularly elected and then
confirmed by the congress of the state.
[563] These authorities must represent both eth-
nic groups (Indians and Ladinos) to war-
rant the claim that "justice is equal for
everybody." In 1936 the state government
ruled that in all municipios where the in-
digenous population predominates, the pre-
sidente municipal should be an Indian.

Next in authority after the presidente is

[P 219-B]

631 the secretario, who is, without exception, a
Ladino, for his responsibilities require a
good knowledge of the Spanish language as
well as office skills, which the Indians usually
lack. Actually it is this official who controls
all the administrative affairs of the
municipio. He imposes fines, collects taxes,
assigns communal work, and keeps in contact
[62] with the state authorities. After him
rank the regidor, síndico, alcalde, police
commander, and policemen.

621 Besides these authorities, which are the
officially recognized ones, the Indians have
their own government system, which in
most places is still operating. Oxchuc is
[888] typical of the regional pattern. There the
[887] municipio is divided into two calpules, each
of which is a kind of fraternity under the
supervision of those old men having the
[776] greatest knowledge and prestige. Each calpul
[796] has also its own patron saint, venerated
with special feasts and ceremonies throughout
the year. (In Oxchuc the calpules are
not geographically determined, and its
members are spread in different parajes of
62 the territory.) Authority is now integrated
in the following officials:

1 katinab, supreme chief of the whole calpul
1 ókil kabil, "feet and hands" of the preceding, i.e., secretary
2 dzunubiles, supreme "pulsers" or "curers"
1 alcalde, who carries a staff of office
2 cornales (or governors), who also carry staffs of office
2 síndicos, who also carry staffs of office
4 x-tules (or regidores)

555 The four last jobs are reached by strict
624 hierarchy and indicate the progress of each
794 individual in the fulfillment of his social
duties. This social-service career begins
when the man is not yet married, when he
is assigned the cargo of mayordomo of the
church, which means that he has to attend
to minor affairs connected with the church
and to keep it clean. Shortly after his marriage
he usually reaches the position of
capitán, where he is responsible for the fies-

The country near the village has been farmed out long ago; now 361
the fields lie at a distance in the jungle. After every concentration, 311
the Indians drift away again like blown smoke. Today most of the [241]
houses are rotten, sagging, with gaping doors. The paths are grown
up with weeds, huge, old moss-covered crosses lean at crazy angles
by the main trails. Over all broods the frame of the sacked church,
huge stone walls with rank vegetation around them, and a twisted,
unhealthy oak-tree on one
side, like a composition
by Piranesi.

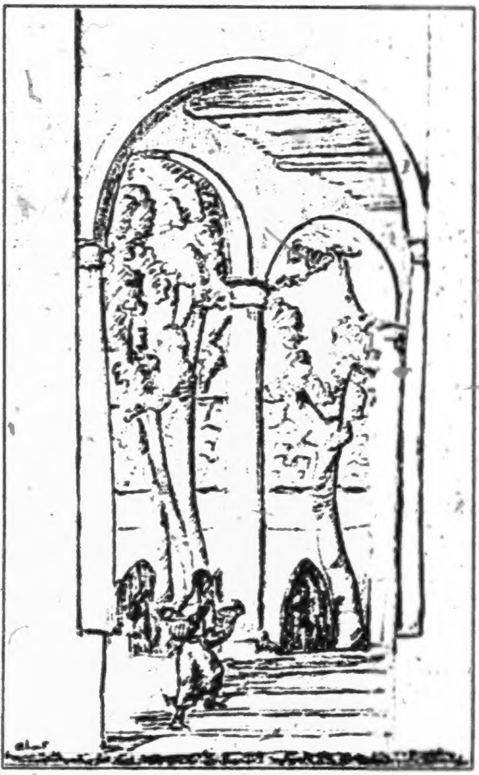


Fig. 277—Ocosingo, Chis. Colonnade on the Plaza.

Ocosingo Valley and 133
its neighbours furnish a
transition towards the
real highlands. The valleys
are fertile and green,
ringed in with ranges of
steep, rich hills. The soil 134
in the lower parts is 137
light; here palms and
pines grow together, with
a luxuriance of rich grass
that makes an ideal grazing
country. Through 361
the valleys are large and
small ranches of Ladinos
and old Spanish families.
The bigger ones, such as
San Antonio, Quechil,
and Achin in the Ocosingo
Valley, San José Reforma
and El Real beyond
the San José Pass,
and Tecojá in its own
valley, each has a village
of Indian labourers
attached to them. The 342
natives' houses are rather
better that the average, and often tile-roofed (fig. 278). The Indians 241
of each ranch function more or less as a tribe, governed by 648
the owner of the ranch, conducting their own worship at its chapel.
A few Indians own scattered, independent farms. Sivacá (*sivak* 361
ha', "Gunpowder Water"), near Ocosingo on the trail to Tenango, 621 •
is a true village, self-governing, with its own *alcalde*, under the supervision 622
of a Ladino *maestro*. All these groups come together at 628
796

501 raft, *poi,* to cross rivers or make very short trips. The specimen observed at *Hol-ha'* (Head of the Water), was made of five cork logs averaging 22 centimeters in diameter and 3.25 meters long, held together by two cross-sticks lashed on with lianas. There was some space between each log, the width of the raft being 1.25 meters. It had a definite bow and stern, the logs at the forward end being cut to an edge, "to cut the water." These rafts are propelled by a pole, preferably of mahogany, the one observed being 2.50 meters long. They are moored by thrusting the pole through a crack between two of the logs, into the bottom of the stream.

648 As one would expect, the old, complicated organization of priests and rulers, the aristocracy of pre-Conquest days, has been utterly swept away. Today, in their social organization, one may trace a little of the feeling of the old times, but the system is the creature of Spanish contact. On the haciendas there are no native officials save those who preside over the fiestas. The owner of the hacienda maintains a patriarchal sway over his workmen, governing them in every respect. Among the village tribes at Bachajon and Sivacá life is still influenced by the obligation to work for the government or the ranchers, although the independent nature of the Indians has won for them a good deal of self-government. Those of the Bachajon living on land belonging to ranches find themselves under a dual system, although the scattered location of their dwellings, deep in the jungles, minimizes the power of the Ladinos.

621 The tribes are very different from those of North America.
From our brief observation, it appears as though there was none of
that deep feeling of loyalty towards the group, of essential, almost
mystic unity with the other members that characterizes our own In-
dians. Similar customs, common interest, and geographical prox-
imity hold each Tzeltal group together; bonds that are easily broken.
[609] Should an outsider attack the common weal by seizure of land or
[578] by any other infringements, he will find the tribe solidly united
against him, but at the same time it may be, and often is divided
627 within itself by many quarrels. The Bachajon carry out long feuds
between families and individuals in the form of occasional murders.
These have their origin in delayed retribution for some wrong re-
ceived by one party from the other, for which, in turn, there is
retaliation, and so on indefinitely.

For instance, the murder committed while we were at Encanto
was the climax of a long-nursed grudge, and almost immediately
afterwards there were indications that from that fight would arise
648 many others. Occasional attacks on ranchers are also usually carried

out by a small group bearing a grudge, although in this case the 648
tribe as a whole stands more solidly back of the offenders.

628 The Bachajon exhibit internal dissension and strife to an unusual degree. There are many small, outlying sub-groups, some of which are more or less openly at war with the main body. In the description of Zona Sala oil camp (Chapter VIII) something has already been said of the settlement there of men driven away on account of the misbehaviour. They still call themselves Bachajon and maintain some slight intercourse with the tribe, although they are quite inimical in their attitude towards Indians passing through on the way to Palenque. There are other such settlements in different parts of the jungle, although these, having most recently split off, are the most hostile.

What group loyalty the Bachajon have centers around the deserted 621
village that bears their name. It was described at the beginning 609
of this chapter. Founded under compulsion, deserted whenever possible, its church and Cabildo in ruins, none the less it is their focal point, jealously guarded from intrusion. These Indians have had the same experience as our own; the European comes first as a visitor, then a few settle for trade, then comes a host in their footsteps, until soon there is no place for the Indian, and he finds himself an intruder in his own home. Against this sequence of events, so common in our history, the Bachajon protect their land by an attitude of unremitting hostility. Travellers may pass through, but no trader may set up even a lean-to bower under which to display his wares, save during the few days of their main fiestas, although it would be a great convenience for them to have a store nearer than Ocosingo.

829 The destruction of the Spanish-built church and Cabildo, with the substitution for them of native edifices, is curious. The feeling probably is that when they do congregate in their capital for a fiesta, they do not wish to be confronted by evidences of alien domination.

The strongest actual unit is that of the individual family, the 593
man, his wife, and children. Indians who are forced, for one reason 594
or another, to go into hiding in the jungle, will run great risks to
return and fetch their wives and children. Even beyond this smallest 602
group there is a little feeling, a man's relatives by marriage or blood 627
often joining to support him in a feud, or to revenge a wrong done
him. Similarly, the relatives of the individual who committed the [672]
wrong are held in some degree liable to punishment, although there
is no formal rule of collective responsibility, the action taken depending largely on individual inclination.

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Bachajón
Sivacá

• 621 Bachajon and Sivacá are governed through native officials selected from among the men of repute in the tribe by the Mexican Government, more or less in accordance with the Indians' wishes. They serve for definite terms, usually two years, and may be reappointed. Bachajon Village, organized when the whole tribe was concentrated there, has two complete administrations, each with a 624 president, council, and secretary. At Sivacá the only official is the *alcalde*, who carries as insignia a staff, *barra,* 1.50 meters long, decorated with a double cross in black at the head. The secretaries [212] are chosen primarily for literacy; the others are older men of influence in the tribe. The great respect with which they are treated by the natives indicates that the selections accord fairly well with those they would make themselves.

648 651 Each group is in the charge of a resident Mexican official called the *Maestro,* corresponding to our Reservation Agent. He is appointed by the Presidente Municipal of the local government. He is paid with taxes collected by himself from the Indians in produce or money, to which he adds commissions obtained from his services as a labour agent, the profits of trade in a few staples, and receipts from travelers, for whom his house is the official guest-house.

648 622 621 Ordinarily the *Maestro* does not give his orders directly to the Indians, but works through the native president, who may openly oppose him if he see fit, though he is in some degree bound to obey. The influence and power of the *Maestro* depends upon the individual, and on the temper of the Indians under him. In extreme cases he will send for troops, a measure greatly dreaded, as the soldiers, once arrived, may stay indefinitely, helping themselves freely to the pigs and chickens of the natives, and generally making themselves objectionable.

648 622 624 In addition to those appointed by the Government, the Indians accord obedience and respect to a considerable body of purely native officials. The only ones fulfilling a civic function are the class known as *Principales,* who exist chiefly among the Bachajon. They are men who know how to read and write Spanish, living in places more available to the outlying Indians than the Secretaries at Bachajon Village, and are usually men in whom confidence is reposed. Although they hold their position without official selection, but by general consent, they are recognized by the Mexicans with whom they deal as holding a sort of power of attorney for their people. They examine and sign written documents, and compose communications from the Indians to the Government. Through this they gain an influence with which, if they be men of force, they may become leaders of real power in their own districts. A *Principale* whom we met at El Encanto, where he had come in to buy salt, was

the informal chief of one of the semi-separated, turbulent groups 648
already described. He was a well-built, square-faced, sullen yet 622
cunning looking fellow, with a long scar from a machete cut across 624
one cheek, and credited with a number of murders.

The shamans or medicine-men, *poci'*, although primarily doctors, 756
have a quasi-priestly status, the result of the intimate relation of 554
prayer and healing, of which more will be said later. They are honored accordingly as holy men, as well as for the power conferred by their knowledge of medicine and charms. A shaman obtains his position by some years of study under another, who teaches him both medicines and prayers. His repute largely depends upon the results of his practice.

Certain older men are selected annually to have charge of the 794
fiestas, or saint's day celebrations; they have charge of all prepara- 796
tions and of the conduct of the fiesta, as well as being usually responsible for the care of the various sacred properties during the year. These officers exist in the hacienda groups as well as in the tribes. At the Finca Tecojá, where a fiesta was observed in progress, they were an amiable pair of rather drunken old men, known as *Caporales,* and at most places, in common with other officers holding posts of Spanish derivation, they were known by Spanish names. Interestingly enough, in the villages with the Governmental organization described above, they rarely coincide with the Government appointees, although this may be partly due to the fact that they are usually selected from among the oldest men. In Guatemala these semi-church officers often are a mask for tribal positions of real power, as was found to be the case with the *tcimañ* of Jacaltenango, who will be described in writing of that place (Chapter
XIX). Here their influence and prestige was relatively slight, [554]
save during the period when their duties placed them in charge.

Almost the only trace of pre-Conquest feeling is to be found in 756
the great reverence shown towards all shamans and Government ap- 621
pointees. An ordinary Indian will offer food, drink, or tobacco to 554
all men of authority present before taking anything himself, even 576
though it means the consumption, for instance, of almost all of a bottle of *aguardiente* before he gets any at all. We saw a chief at Tenango, where the same system prevails, take a lighted cigar from an Indian's mouth, giving him instead some unrolled tobacco leaves. When first coming into the presence of such men, or passing them on the road, an Indian will take off his hat, bowing deeply; the chief or shaman touches the Indian's forehead, and he goes on. This is performed with grace and dignity. It is known as *k'ol-tanup,* "head giving" (*k'ol* from *hol,* head). Instances were observed of thus

756

• 621
554 "giving the head" to certain elder women, but the reason could not
576 be ascertained.

581 Marriage is an economic and social affair, apparently free of religious significance. Don Arturo Tovilla of Cacate-el, gave us a description of the manner of seeking a wife, which is here paraphrased. It will be seen that the importance, ceremonially, centers on the contract with the parents, while the actual joining in marriage is not stressed.

584 The boy's father goes with the boy to the girl's house, both dressed in their best clothes, and carrying a gift of three bottles (pints) of aguardiente "and some animal." His father tells the girl's father that his son wishes to marry the daughter; to which the answer is to call the girl and ask her if she likes him. She says nothing, but keeps on scratching the wall with her finger and the floor with her toe, thereby indicating that she likes the boy, while showing the proper maidenly modesty. The latter gives her a coloured handkerchief, pearl beads, etc., with which the contract is sealed.

The boy is obligated to bring to her house what the father may ask, such as corn, beans, aguardiente, as well as to help in the work for a year. He makes a social visit each Sunday, which the girl must receive. At the end of the time appointed by the parents, he takes her to his house.

If the girl does not signify her consent in the manner described, the match does not take place.

583 When the parents of one or both parties do not countenance the match, it may happen that the children, taking the law into their own hands, run away. The procedure in this case has become formalized so that, while unpleasant enough to act as a deterrent, it recognizes this as a regular manner of marrying. This description also is para-
[115] phrased from Señor Tovilla.

When the parents forbid, but both children desire the match, after the boy has gone to the girl's house and been refused, his obligation of respect is ended. He builds a house in a retired place in the jungle. He and the girl meet to make their plans where she goes to get water, for which purpose she may often choose a spring a kilometer or more from her house. At an appointed time, they run away.

584 When he has carried her off and hidden her, his parents must go
585 and apologize to hers. The girl's father tells the boy's not to leave before being punished. He, however, finds and brings in the couple, who kneel before the girl's parents. The boy's shirt is taken off, and

We had a better chance here than anywhere else to look over 621
the village government. It being Sunday, all were present, the 624
Presidente Municipal, the *Secretario,* and council of *Regidores,* elderly men, grave of mien, with small, black goatees. The ordinary villagers treated them with the greatest respect. Each official carried a silver-headed cane with a red ribbon tied to it and the name of his office inscribed on the head. They are appointed to their offices by the government with the ratification of the village.
The Maestro works entirely through them, and their orders are ab- 624
solutely obeyed. Indeed, owing to the independent nature of the 648
Tenangeros, the Maestro is rather like the ambassador of a powerful foreign nation persuading the local government, through tact and very gentle pressure, to behave.

We finished our survey about noon, the Indians appearing un- 126
willing to have us enter their houses. For the rest of that day we 123
spent our time working up our notes into good shape, then teaching the gift chickens to do tricks until Lazaro claimed them for the pot, and in dodging the local officials who, having got themselves slightly tipsy in honour of the Sabbath, came importuning us to give them cigarettes, of which we ourselves were short.

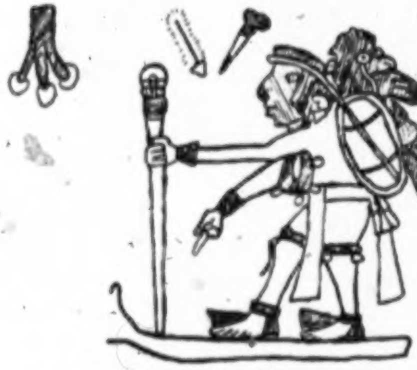


Fig. 320—Travelling Aztec Merchant. Drawing after the Codex Laud.

Both that night and the night before, traveling traders built 443
their little pine fires on the mud verandah of the Cabildo. In one case it was a Mexican and an Indian, in the other two Mexicans, to be distinguished from Indians only by the cut of their trousers and a donkey. They travelled with their big packs on a tump-line, long staff in hand, for all the world like a living re-incarnation of the traders shown in the pre-Columbian drawings of the codices (fig. 320). In old times they traded parrots, macaws, obsidian, textiles,
jade, and later, gold and copper. Now it is a business of cheap 443
watches, gaudy cloths, and ten-cent jewelry, bringing Connecticut, 439
Hamburg, and Orizaba down to a fiesta in Bachajon village, following the old trade-route along which we were going, in the other direction, to San Cristóbal. Very few of the present Indian tribes

291 shorts are also usually embroidered in red and yellow. The chief had
such a pair, very fine and gaudy, which we asked to see. He took
[123] them off to show us, but when we tried to buy them from him he
became furiously angry and abusive. Sandals, when worn, are of
[293] the ordinary type. Most of the Indians carry a staff of some kind.

The women wear the typical blue skirt, but the blouse, cut like
[531] a poncho, is usually tucked inside and heavily embroidered about the
neck and shoulders. This work takes a long time, and the finished
blouses are valued very highly.
[342] When worn outside they nearly
[231] cover the skirts, which are just
[854] knee length. Red sashes with a
← yellow stripe from Tapachula,
of the kind worn also around
Ocosingo, bind the skirts at the
302 → waist. Hair is done in two
braids with dark red ribbon, or
tied up in a knot over the fore-
head as at Cancuc.

Fig. [illegible]—Tenejapa, Chis. Indians in the street.

Men and women alike wear
301 → cheap, gay-coloured necklaces,
usually rosaries.

The Indians move with great
621 freedom through the town and
563 lounge in company with the
→ Ladinos on the broad porch of
the Town Hall. The officials
[293] → are distinguished by silver-head-
ed canes with black tassels. In
lieu of a Maestro, they are di-
rectly under the Ladino *Presi-
dente Municipal,* and their dis-
putes are tried by the local
695 judge. Their lawsuits have a
344 mediaeval air, carried on pub-
licly with great clamor on the Town Hall porch, and all concerned
speaking with the utmost freedom. A breach of promise case was
observed in the course of trial. It went on for at least two hours
with never-less than two Indians, usually women, speaking at once.
One could not but admire the patience of the rather bored and in-
different judge.

114 The cargadores from Cancuc arrived shortly after dark, still
lively despite the long day and steep climb. More remarkable still,

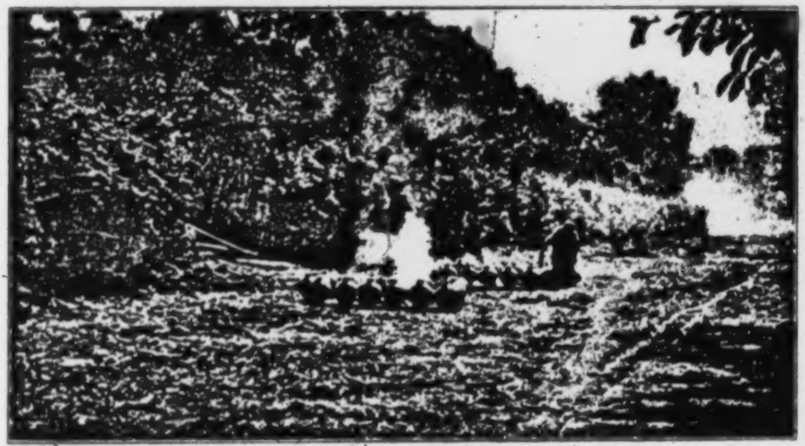
5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango
Tzotzil NV11

Tze 142 Tze 291

The men are tallish and the majority of them have sparse, black beards. They wear plain, white cotton tunics and short trousers, sashes, and hats of the sombrero type. The women wear the usual short, blue skirts. Their blouses are cut with a square neck, around which are embroidered three bands, each about two centimeters wide, of red, yellow and red. At the corners, little imitation tassels are embroidered in the same colours.

Tze 621 623 Tze [115]

We were told, by an unreliable informant, that this village was remarkable for its independence. Its officials are chosen by the natives alone, and run through a regularly prescribed *cursus honorum* from secretary up to president, and then on to the council of elders. Government laws and orders sent to the village are debated by this council and are not published unless approved by them.



Tze 323

Fig. 333—Amatenango, Chis. Pottery baking.

Tze 584 323 606

We were also told that in case of marriage each party works for his or her prospective in-laws, and that the girl at that time learns pottery making, taking over the mother-in-law's specialty.

Tze 648 434 171

While there was no way of checking up on this information, it is true that there is no Maestro at Amatenango, and that the Indians seem to be an unusually self-respecting and self-reliant lot. Of all the Tzeltal people observed, they were the only ones who seemed to compare with the Zotzil-speaking Chamulas in energy and prosperity.

Tzo 114 137

Returning to ourselves and our trip. We left Tenejapa on the following morning by a winding, broad road climbing to a pass in

571
554 192 and the meanings of the possessed forms are "wife" or "husband" of the coordinating person.

The remainder of the forms in this class are subsumed under the headword /H.*A*TEL-ETIK/, "workers."

571 554 192 621 On the next lower level of contrast, the headword is modified by one of the mutually exclusive post-modifiers /TA KABILTO/, "in the cabildo (civil)"; /TA MARTOMIL/, "in the mayordomía (religious)." These in turn constitute head words of two mutually exclusive classes of forms. The set of contrasting forms in the class /H.*A*TEL-ETIK TA KABILTO/ is as follows (in order of ascending rank):

/MAYOR/, "policia" ranked from /XWAXKEBAL/, "eighth," to /BA/, "first" or /HEFE DE KWARTEL/

/SINTIKO/, "sindico"

/REHIDOR/, "regidor" ranked from /XCEBAL/ "second" to /BA/ "first"

/XCEBAL REHIMAL/, "second regimal"

/BA REHIMALA ~ SUPLENTE PRESIRENTE/, "first rehimal or assistant presidente"

/PRESIRENTE ~ *AHENTE (MUNISIPAL)/, "presidente or ahente munisipal"

/XCEBAL HWES/, "second juez"

/HWES/ — /*ALKAL/, "juez"

571
554 (Several forms not included in this set are nevertheless part of
192
621 the civil administration--/SEKRETARYO/, "secretary," /PRESIRENTE DE EDUKASYON/, "supervisor of education," and /KOMISARYADO *EYHIDAL/, "ejido commissioner.")

The /*A*TEL-ETIK TA KABILTO/ are responsible for the civil business of the community, resolution of conflicts brought before it, the maintenance of community facilities and the making of a limited number of decisions which affect the community as a whole. Its members are recruited yearly for one-year terms
[641] the whole group assuming office in January. Every male in the community is expected to hold office as a civil cargo holder four times in his life, and the order of recruitment to the position for any individual is more or less fixed.

571
554 The forms of the class /H.*A*TEL-ETIK TA MARTOMIL/ are
192 grouped as follows (also in order of ascending rank):
794 The first and lowest set of positions includes:

/MARTOMO SAKRAMENTO/	"mayordomo of San Antonio"
/MARTOMO ME*TIK ROSARYO/	"mayordomo of the Virgin of Rosario"
/MARTOMO ME*TIK NATIBIDAD/	"mayordomo of the Virgin of Natividad"

By lowest, we mean that set of positions into one of which an individual would initially be co-opted upon entering the mayordomia.

*273 Old men often give up drinking except when, as of-
887 fice holders, they are obligated to participate in drinking per-
• 621 formances. Changes in drinking patterns during the life cycle
273* are discussed by Felix Perez as follows:
539

> HTATIK TA HNA *AMETO LEK SYA*BE C'IN TRAWO, HO*TIK X*ATEHOTIK *A MATO HNA*TIK YUC'EL *A C'IN TRAWI.
>
> My father drank aguardiente a lot. We worked, we didn't know how to drink aguardiente.
>
> *EHK STUKEL KOM TA YUC'EL Z'IN *EHK C'IN TRAWI.
>
> Then he himself stopped drinking trago.
>
> *ATEHON HPAS PUERSA NAME TALE MATO KUC'LEK *EHK *A C'IN TRAWI.
>
> I worked, I made an effort for several years. I didn't drink much trago.
>
> YUN Z'IN TE HLIHK HZAK MANYA Z'IN *EHKE, KUC' PERO YUN LA KILIX TEK TE *AY TU*Y KUN Z'IN *EHKE.
>
> Then the madness began to get hold of me, and I drank, but it was because I saw that I had something of my own.

Composition of drinking groups

273* Almost without exception, men drink in groups rather than
571 alone. The importance of companions in the development of a
273*
539 drinking situation is suggested by Sabino Hernandez' description
571 of one such situation:

> TAL Z'IN *IL *ABANKIL, STAT CIKO, BETO Z'INI.
>
> In came your elder brother, the father of Francisco, Alberto.
>
> HUL SK'AN HUN KWARTA XC'IN YA*AL.
>
> He came to ask for a cuarto of aguardiente.

273* 571 social distance between drinking companions increases with the length of time from the original drinking situation, and one finds men who live great distances apart and even men from opposite barrios (who are afraid of each other when sober) sharing a bottle of aguardiente as the days go by.

273* 621 571 Aguacatenango men drink largely within the community, and even when men drink in market towns such as Pinola or Teopisca they tend to drink with their traveling companions and not with ladinos. (The one or two reports of Aguacatenangueros drinking with ladinos involved fully bilingual individuals, and they ended with fighting or loss of property by the Aguacatenango men.)

273* 182 Drinking in Aguacatenango is scheduled in terms of the calendar of saints' days and by the occurrence of critical events in the life cycle of individuals--e.g., birth, baptism, marriage (and sometimes divorce), and death. Drinking is also an essential part of the resolution or the escalation of conflict, of illness and curing, of the branding of livestock and of the consecration of new buildings. Participation in a particular drinking cycle is largely determined by--and signifies--an individual's membership in a household group, in the civil or the religious hierarchy, or in the larger, highly relational role set including bilateral kindred, ritual kinsmen, and neighbors. 000 Participation in drinking cycles is restricted to adult

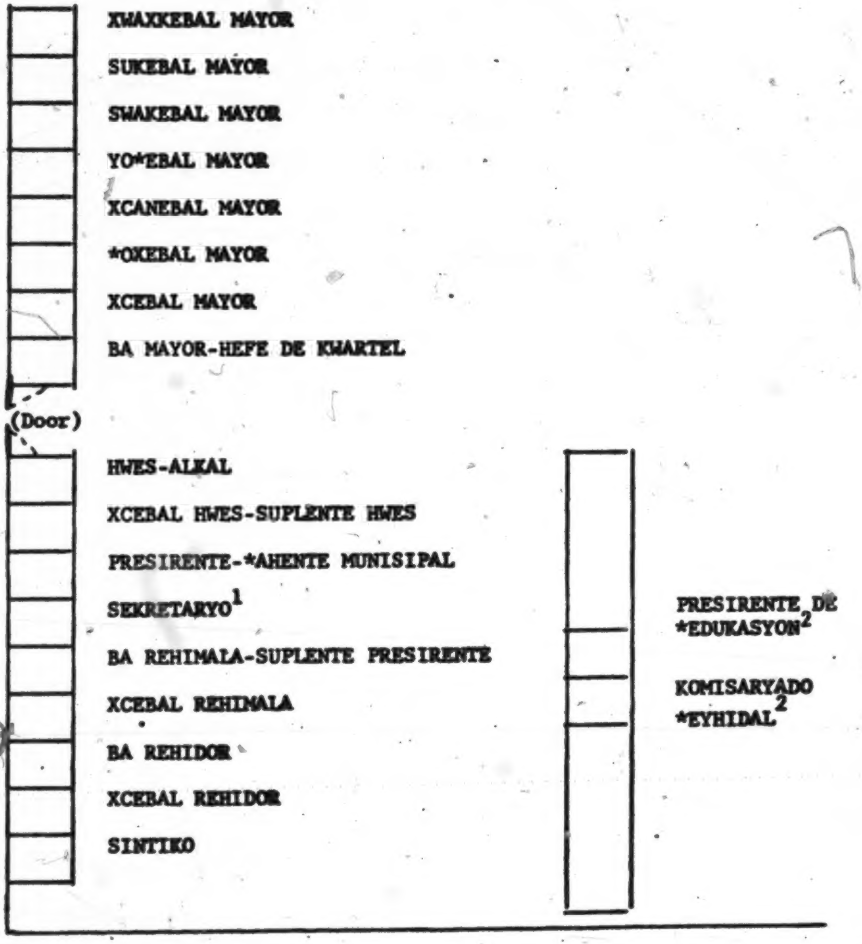
273* 554 about the state of their environment are deduced as the result of the communication of information encoded in some one or more media. The determination and certification of an individual's social rank is one type of inference and action that individuals engage in in Aguacatenango. Rank and role are not only encoded in the drinking performances, but also in a variety of other media as well. When we examine the ceremonial drinking cycle as it occurs in the civil and religious hierarchies, it becomes clear that the arrangement of persons in space, modes of greeting, modes of offering toasts, the differential access to settings, etc., all may encode an individual's social position just as do the set of role labels that may be used to identify him.

[578] [609] [796] [621] After the settlement of a dispute, after having agreed to permit a /HTUL YAN LUMAL/, "foreigner," to settle in the community, and on certain saints' days (especially those saints associated with the installation of new civil officers), the /*A*TELETIK TA KABILTO/, or civil hierarchy, is given or secures for itself aguardiente in liter bottles. The aguardiente is equally distributed in shot glass amounts among the members of the /*A*TELETIK/, a particular individual drinking the glass which is offered him; or alternative should he choose not to drink it, taking a sip from it and handing it to some other member of the group who drinks the remaining portion and returns the glass to the first drinker, who in turn returns it to the

TABLE 11

273*
621
554

SOME PERFORMANCE CORRELATES OF "RANK" WITHIN /*A*TEL-ETIK TA KABILTO/: SEATING ORDER


XWAXKEBAL MAYOR
SUKEBAL MAYOR
SWAKEBAL MAYOR
YO*EBAL MAYOR
XCANEBAL MAYOR
*OXEBAL MAYOR
XCEBAL MAYOR
BA MAYOR-HEFE DE KWARTEL
(Door)
HWES-ALKAL
XCEBAL HWES-SUPLENTE HWES
PRESIRENTE-*AHENTE MUNISIPAL
SEKRETARYO[1]
BA REHIMALA-SUPLENTE PRESIRENTE
XCEBAL REHIMALA
BA REHIDOR
XCEBAL REHIDOR
SINTIKO
PRESIRENTE DE *EDUKASYON[2]
KOMISARYADO *EYHIDAL[2]

---

[1] The position of secretary is by appointment and is not included in the civil hierarchy.

TABLE 11--Continued

000 not included in the civil hierarchy.

273*
621
554 [2]The positions of president of education and ejido commissioner are two-year appointments, and neither is (yet) in the civil hierarchy.

273*
796
794
554 semble, they seat themselves initially on the inside of the two benches. The relative order of seating is as follows:

TABLE 12

SOME PERFORMANCE CORRELATES OF "RANK": SEATING ORDER OF /*A*TEL-ETIK TA MARTOMIL/

BA MARTOMO SAKRAMENTO

XCEBAL MARTOMO SAKRAMENTO

BA MARTOMO ME*TIK ROSARYO

XCEBAL MARTOMO ROSARYO

BA MARTOMO ME*TIK NATIBIDAD

XCEBAL MARTOMO ME*TIK NATIBIDAD

BA MARTOMO *ANIMA

XCEBAL MARTOMO *ANIMA

BA MARTOMO SAN MARTIN

XCEBAL MARTOMO SAN MARTIN

BA MARTOMO SANTA CRUS

XCEBAL MARTOMO SANTA CRUS

BA MARTOMO SAN SEBSTYAN

XCEBAL MARTOMO SAN SEBSTYAN

273*
796
794
554
The drinking of aguardiente takes place on the porch after the men are seated. Again the aguardiente is distributed in shot glass amounts to each member of the mayordomía. Again, as in the case of the civil officials, a strict relative order of succession of drinking is followed, proceeding from the top of Table 12 (p. 61) to the bottom.

273*
621
794
554
In both the referential sets of civil officials and religious officials, then, there are occasions when both seating arrangements and drinking arrangements uniquely express a relative order property in the relations between members of each set. This relative order property we can call differential rank. While this type of rank is a somewhat special case, it is essentially the same age differential which establishes rank in [561] the community at large. The civil and religious hierarchies are very nearly age-graded, the higher-ranking positions being occupied by older men. A survey of the histories of individuals' cargos indicates that the age grading is more strict in the case of the mayordomos than in the case of the civil officials. In each set of officials, men with adjacent ranks sit next to each other and drink in succession, the man with the higher rank sitting in an arbitrarily defined higher position on the bench and drinking sooner. It is important to note that of a variety of ways in which the aguardiente could be used to express the rank difference (e.g., the distribution of larger amounts to the senior

273* ● 621 794 554 positions), only relative order of drinking is used. It is the arbitrary selection of order as the medium of communication of roles and ranks that leads us to describe drinking performances as a code.

*273 621 794 554 561 We have observed that on the occasion of ceremonial drinking, not only will the relative age differences of the adult males be expressed in the relative order in which they are served aguardiente, but so also will they arrange themselves spatially in such a way that the drink server will be able to meet the obligation of serving the older person first without skipping anyone in the seating order. In other words, men, in the first stages of ceremonial drinking, will arrange themselves in order of relative age-rank, and thus receive in perfect spatial and temporal succession the aguardiente which they drink.

273* 621 794 554 533 The ceremonial drinking sequence is associated with the presence of a marimba which plays throughout the course of the fiesta and the departure of which signals the termination of the same. While the marimba players are paid to play at the fiesta, with regard to the consumption of aguardiente they are treated as are all other males who are present. In some cases, they will be offered drinks with greater frequency to begin with, as it is supposed by the host that they will play more frequently and will charge less if they are somewhat intoxicated.

000 The ceremonial drinking sequence is regularly associated

177 very adjustments and adaptations that make economic survival possible.
178 Cut off from other Indian communities around them since the Conquest,
when their ceremonial centers were destroyed and the political hierarchy
which drew them into a single polity was replaced, the Indians were able
to retain a sense of cultural independence within the corporate communi-
• [621] ties (Wolf 1957b). Each community developed a distinctive style of life in
which the old pre-Conquest beliefs and customs were reworked with the
colonial Spanish introductions. Validation of their behavior lay in the be-
[769] lief that they were doing as the ancestors did, and that they were living
"in the eyes of our ancestors."

[769] This social fiction is now threatened by a growing disbelief in the presence of these supernatural figures. The crisis caused by the disjunction between belief and behavior is forcing the Indians to reassess their present condition. Awareness of the contradictions between what they do and what they think they ought to do is forced upon them by events over which they have no control.

121 This study of a Maya Indian community in the state of Chiapas, Mexico, deals with the problem of the relation between belief and behavior in a changing world. It is a problem that we have failed to solve in our own society, if the labels of our time—The Age of Anxiety, The Society of Alienation—have meaning. I have studied this small Indian society not in search of a solution but as a way of phrasing the problem in the widest possible context.

I selected Tzoʔontahal because the people seemed to have retained a traditional Indian culture even though the community is on the Pan-American Highway linking them with the departmental and national capitals. The question of what changes had affected their lives and how they had responded to them was relevant to my interest in the effects of national changes on local groups. In the last year of my study my interest broadened from an enquiry into responses to external changes to a study of the meanings assigned to both internal and external changes.

621 Like many other predominantly Mayan communities of the Chiapas highlands, the community is the context of all meaningful social relations. Endogamy and a belief that the people who live in the center and the nearby barrios are descended from the same ancestors give a sense of eth-

nic unity extending back to the beginning of time. The people set boundaries T 621
by such external symbols as a locally specified costume for men and
women, a distinctive dialect of Tzeltal, and specialization in the production
of pottery. Implicit boundaries are established by socialization processes
that inhibit response to the outside world and that define a code of T
behavior understandable only in its own context. The completely socialized [156]
member of the community is not expected to seek recognition, nor T
could he find prestige, outside these boundaries. The community comprises [626]
the moral universe: cooperation and reciprocity are limited to members
of the community, as are most cases of homicide and theft. Lacking
concrete evidence, people assume misdeeds to have been committed by
someone from the community. T

The boundaries that separate these Indians from other Indian communities 186
as well as from non-Indian, or *Ladino*,[1] communities are social artifacts 197
that give a sense of security to members of the in-group. They call [101]
themselves "the true men" (*b'atz'il winik*), and their world is defined in
"the true word" (*b'atz'il k'op*). The latter is their term for the Tzeltal dialect
of Maya which is the language of the house and of the street, the
courthouse, and the church in the absence of the Spanish-speaking priest.
Tzeltal names differ from Spanish names for most of the surrounding
towns, the earth, the heavens, and the cosmological bodies. Catholic saints
are incorporated under a Tzeltal name or a Tzeltal version of their Spanish T
name. All of the members of the community have a Tzeltal patronym [551]
in addition to the Spanish surname with which they are baptized. The
given name is that of a Spanish saint but is shortened and pronounced
with Tzeltal phonemes, and female names have the feminine prefix *x*.
Their world is labeled in their own language. T

The people assume that their expectations will be met and their projec- 186

---

[1] The term Ladino has a range of usage throughout Middle America. In Mexico City, M
people define Ladino as any person who abuses his superior skills to take advantage of [829]
others. In Oaxaca, a Zapotec Indian defined Ladino as "an Indian who knows Spanish, has adopted western-style clothing, and takes advantage of other Indians because of his knowledge of the language and ways of life of the non-Indian society. He is like a fox." In Chiapas, the term is applied to any non-Indian without derogatory connotation, and the same is true in Guatemala. In the metalanguage of anthropological monographs, it is used in this latter sense.

621 A territorial distinction not recognized by the federal government is the
361 division of the town center into two sections, or sides, by the street running
in front of the church. The two sides of the division are called
[192] Ahk'olnantik, upper side, and Alannantik, lower side. The upper side is in
the direction of higher lands in the southwest called Ahk'olk'inal, and the
lower side is in the direction of lower lands to the northeast, called
Alank'inal. The emphasis on relative altitude implicit in place nomenclature
is a central fact in the Indians' ecological adjustment. Marriage is
[582] endogamous within each division by explicit rule, and in fact 87 percent of
[183] all marriages conform to the rule, according to a census I took in 1958. A
[125] man who marries a girl on the opposite side is forced to make a payment
[583] of eighteen liters of liquor to the bachelors of the opposite division. In
addition to regulating competition for marriage partners, the dual division is
the basis for allocating civil and religious offices.

174 Whether the dual division was an indigenous trait or not is a moot
621 point. The pattern for dual organizations existed in both Spanish and indigenous
societies (Foster 1951:5). There is some speculation that the dual
divisions are a product of the Spanish colonial policy of the congregación,
when populations of different origins were drawn together. However,
local historical accounts indicate that several ethnic groups were introduced
175 at various periods. After the initial congregación, foreign Indians
621 were incorporated in the sixteenth century, in the latter part of the nineteenth
563 century (Secretaría de Gobierno Constitucional, October 26, 1893),
and as late as the 1930s in response to the land reform program. As each
ethnic group entered the region, it was either incorporated into one of the
existing divisions or was isolated. The persistence of polarization must be
621 explained on other grounds. The widespread distribution in the Chiapas
[174] highlands of dual divisions defined by territory and descent in communities
of both dispersed and nucleated settlement patterns suggests the indigenous
origins of the division. A dual division of upper and lower sections
based on endogamy and equal representation is found in San Pedro Chenalhó
(Guiteras Holmes 1961:64), Chanal (Eva Hunt, NSF II report), Oxchuk
(Villa Rojas 1946:424), and Cancuk (Siverts 1964). The Nahuatl
term *calpul* is applied in some cases to these divisions. The towns where
calpulles are found are *paraje,* or vacant center, types (Tax 1937) which

were not affected by the congregación. The fact that there is no mention 621
in the post-Conquest documents of the introduction of dual divisions sug- [174]
gests that the model was indigenous to the area.

The Indians of Tzoʾontahal state that the dividing line of the division 173
was established in its present position when a new church, replacing the 621
first one which was burned, was built on the present site. Judging from a
date carved in a beam of the church, this must have been about the year
1746. The endogamous restriction on marriage has not led to a sense of ra- 582
cial distinction between the two populations. Both groups feel that they 621
are descendants of the same ancestor figures and under their guardianship.
The same Tzeltal patronyms are distributed on both sides of the division, 551
although there is a clustering of some of them on one or another side. 621
Table 2 shows the distribution of patronyms of 714 male and female
adults; 88 percent of the patronyms are found in both divisions.[4]

The functions of the division in organizing social groupings have been 178
eroded, but some survive. Equal representation by civil officials from the 62
upper and lower sections, when there are two or more posts at the same rank, is still in effect. The principle of alternation of the single posts of president and *síndico,* his administrative assistant, so that one term the incumbent is chosen from Ahk'olnantik and the following term from Alannantik has not been a decisive factor since the 1930s, when Indian communities were being drawn into more active participation in national programs of change (Chapter 9).

Residential expansion within the center has been almost entirely in 621
Ahk'olnantik because of the addition of ejido lands formerly belonging to 178
the finca of San Nicolás on this side of town. This one-sided increase in 161
population finally resulted, in 1965, in a breakdown of the principle of 794
equal representation in the ceremonial posts involving high expenses, [423]
those of the four *alfereces*. Although attempts were made to find candidates in Alannantik, there were no men with sufficient funds who had not

---

[4] Carrasco (n.d.:5) quotes a document in the *Archivo General de Indias de Sevilla, Guatemala* 16 indicating that Spanish patronyms were given to the heads of calpules and that these were to be extended to all members of the calpul. The present distribution of name groups in the dual divisions cannot support this, nor can it refute the possibility that Spanish patronyms were related to some larger kin or territorial grouping more than three hundred years ago.

621
178
794
161

621
551

held that post formerly, and all four alfereces were for the first time taken from one side.

Table 2. Patronyms in the Dual Division

Patronym	*Alannantik only*	*Ahk'olnantik only*	*Alannantik and Ahk'olnantik*
Alvarez			37
Arguella Jimenez	1		
Bautista		1	
Bautista Čail			52
Bautista Čo		5	
Bautista Koʔton			14
Bautista Saʔben			20
Cepeda			1
Cepeda Čilol			29
Cruz Mendez	1		
Diaz			6
Diaz Čamo			5
Diaz Ton			8
Diaz Uz			42
Gomez		2	
Gomez Bot			39
Gomez Kompaš			73
Gomez Kut			49
Gomez Waris	1		
Gonzalez	1		
Gonzalez Ikob		3	
Guitierrez	1		
Hernandez	1		
Hernandez Čela	1		
Hernandez Tenan	4	1	
Jimenez		2	
Leon		2	
Leon Či			21
Leon Čulik			14
Leon Malatz	2		
Lopez			1
Lopez Lab'	1		
Lopez Lin			31
Lopez Mai	11		
Lopez Pokoš		13	
Lopez Tapiya		5	
Lopez Šunton		18	

621
551

Patronym	*Alannantik only*	*Ahk'olnantik only*	*Alannantik and Ahk'olnantik*
Lopez Tz'uʔu			12
Lopez Wolto			50
Lopez Yutz			16
Perez			9
Perez Huhan			4
Perez Kam			11
Perez Kantiro[illegible]			23
Perez Os			17
Perez Otol			16
Perez Tut			18
Perez Ventura			11
Sanchez		3	
Santis Peč	1		
Vasquez		3	
Total	26	58	629

The curing hierarchy was organized on the basis of the dual division 621
until the 1940s. There were two leader curers, one on each side, who were 756
in charge of guarding their own side against intrusion of evil spirits. During the 1940s a breakdown in the hierarchial principle led to some lessening of the power of the group and a collapse of the leadership. People now patronize curers from either section, but there is some feeling that it is safer for the curers if they cure only on their own side.

The dual division persists as a basis of economic organization only in 621
the case of the cattle owner's associations. Pasturage on communal lands is 575
allocated according to residence in the upper or lower division. Since cat- 423
tle raising for beef has increased the size of herds the cattle owners on each 312
side have formed an association to clear the waterholes and celebrate fies- 796
tas at the major waterhole on the Day of the Cross. None of the other new enterprises in town organize on the basis of the territorial division.

In the etiquette of social interaction, the dual division is still taken into 621
account. When a resident of one side walks in the streets of the other side, 576
he is not expected to greet passersby or people in their houses with the usual *b'onme wiš* or *b'onme tat* (I go, elder sister or father, or whatever the appropriate extension of kin terms may be). Such street greetings are
mandatory on one's own side of the town. It is considered much safer to 621

It is considered much safer to
621 drink in a bar on one's own side, but those men who pride themselves on
[273] being widely respected brag that they can drink on either side without be-
[578] coming involved in a fight. When people must pass to the other side of
[491] town, they prefer walking on the Pan-American Highway, a socially neutral network, to passing through the streets of the opposite division, where their presence arouses curiosity and comments, such as "He must be looking for a lover!"

632
621 *The colonias.* The six colonias (Table 1) are populations of Indians who have moved from the center to take advantage of the lands granted under the ejido program of 1937 and "foreign Indians" who were formerly workers on the expropriated plantations. The Indians distinguish the close-lying settlements, or *barrios,* of Yetawitz, Pathuitz, B'očib'al, and Teˀtikil from the remaining colonias listed in the census (Table 1). The populations of the barrios are more closely identified with the center since they are closer to it and there is a higher proportion of migrants from the parent group. They are linked to the side of the dual division to which
[582] they are most closely situated. Marriages can be contracted between mem-
[423] bers of the two settlements, and house lots can be acquired by residents of the town in the barrio with which they are associated. An exception was made to the association on the basis of proximity in the case of Teˀtikil, which lies nearer to Alannantik but was linked with Ahk'olnantik in order to balance the population ratios at the time of its settlement. Police are appointed from these colonias and serve in the local *cabildo,* or town hall, along with other police from the center. The colonias of San Vicente and San Caralampio are farther away, and the rural judge and police appointed to these populations appear only once a week and during ceremonies in the local cabildo. The foreign Indians of San Vicente, who mi-
[167] grated from Chanal, and of Yetawitz, who came from Huistán to work in
[609] the finca of San Nicolás before acquiring ejido lands, are discriminated against in the local political organization. Their representatives never reach the high positions of president and first or second judge.

Ranchos and rancherías. The populations of these small settlements have only the most formal kind of social, economic, and political

ties to the center. They register births and deaths in the township center, 632
but they do not have any representation in the cabildo. The populations 621
have no identification with Indian subgroups, speak Spanish, and are oriented to the regional rather than the local economic center. The plantations remaining in the area, classified as *ranchos* in the national census, employ Indians from the center. Their only relationship to the central authority is to get help in recruiting additional laborers. Recruitment of [464] [241] labor is no longer coercive as it was prior to the 1930s when the low wage rate could not attract the help needed. Announcements of the need for workers are made by the president on the loudspeaker system of the town, and men voluntarily go to the plantations.

SPIRIT DOMAINS

The link between people and place is through the media of the spirits 776
(*č'uleletik*) of persons and of locale. The relationship is maintained 778
through a set of rules governing the behavior among spirits of people and of places. These rules derive from myths and stories of encounters which define the character of the spirits in each of the domains. Danger is localized in a series of caves which are avoided. Benevolent, or guardian, spirits inhabit a different set of sites, where ceremonies are conducted that maintain the well-being of the individual and of the community. By locating [182] and circumscribing places of danger and guardianship, the members of the community can supplicate helpful spirits and avoid evil; they are delivered from fear of the unknown and provided with a rationale for dealing with fear of the known.

The places where spirits meet are outlined in Table 3. The first group [128] includes spirits which are supplicated, the second, dangerous spirits which are avoided or approached only by powerful persons.

The house spirits. The spirits of inhabitants and of the house 776
meet at the center post at the rear wall of the house. The spirit of the 342
house lives in this post. Those who claim to have seen the house spirit say he is a small Ladino child. He is capricious, and if he is not happy, he may admit the evil spirits who will eat the souls of the inmates. His appe- [753]

773 *"Good."*

778 *They waited a while and the water came. "Are you going to drink?"*

539 *They drank, and then they made the sign of the rainbow. The president*
769 *sent his sindico to meet them. The sindico got drunk on the way. He sat down halfway in the road. The brothers met him there. They were angry that a fiesta was not prepared for them. And for this they left town, and went to live in Chiapas.*

773 This tale is known to everyone in town, and there is no doubt as to its au-
778 thenticity expressed by those who have given versions of it. When I took
769 some of the Indians on a trip to Guatemala, they pointed out the rocks
123 where the brothers encountered the devil. When they arrived in Guatemala and saw a bus marked Antigua they expressed amazement that the town was still in existence.

769 Some people claim to have seen the ancestors, whom they describe as
778 wearing the old style costume—a long shirt with the hat now worn by the alfereces. The ancestors are believed to have watched over the village from a mound rising abruptly before the mouth of the cave, called Hol Shan, or Head of Palm, because of the trees growing on it (Plate 1). From this eminence they could watch the streets of the village and see whether anyone was trying to bring in evil (Plate 2). They were able to discern the power of evil in the souls of the newborn and could snatch the soul before its possessor grew up to cause evil. Their human agents in guarding the town
[756] against evil were the curers (*ʔuʔuletik*), who in the context of guardianship were called *meʔiltatil*.[7]

796 Each year on the Day of the Cross, May 3d in the Catholic calendar,[8] a
769 fiesta is held in honor of the ancestors. It refers back to the fiesta which
621 ought to have been held for the returning Shuntonetik, and is performed in the interest of the whole community as a means of ensuring good relations with the ancestors.

[756] Formerly the curers were responsible for conducting this fiesta. An informant recalled the ritual:

---

[7] The guardianship role of the curers is related to the functions of pre-Conquest officials, called *ghcanalum*, "caretakers of the soil" (Calnek 1962:25).

[8] The date of the Day of the Cross was changed by the Vatican in 196[illegible]. When the
[778] local priest tried to reschedule the fiesta in the community, he encountered strong opposition. The Indians continue to celebrate the Day of the Cross on May 3d.

000 maximum market price for wheat of 124 pesos per 100 kgs. The Indians
435 usually sell their wheat at 90 pesos per 100 kgs. to Teopisca truckers, or at
442 best gain 110 pesos per 100 kgs. by bringing it to the mills themselves.
241 From their perspective corn is the more valuable crop, not only from the point of view of subsistence, but also for sale since if they hold it in storage they can sell it at double the price at which the values are calculated in the census (.60 peso per kg.). They do not have facilities to store wheat in order to take maximum advantage of price changes.

125 The census I made in 1964 of land ownership and use by the 304 fami-
423 lies living in the center of the township (Table 5) shows that 47 percent
161 of the households have no land other than the ejido grant of one hectare. Because of the growing population, the land per household has decreased. A comparison with the 1958 census of land ownership of 280 households in the center indicates that 89 families now have less land than they had at that date, 72 have the same amount, and 44 have more land; 99 unknown cases include new families which have been created since the earlier date, families which were no longer in existence in 1964, and households in which there is a lack of data on the question of landholding.

423 The strong sentiment against the sale of one's own land, well docu-
432 mented in the monographic literature,[2] is expressed here:

> *If a man sells his land without sickness, people say he is lazy. The best thing to buy if you have money is land. Unlike cattle, it does not die, it does not get lost, and it does not need watching. It is not the same with a horse. When you buy one, you have to watch it and care for it and when it dies, all is over. You lose all your money. But with land, in two years you have the land paid for and it remains as a gift. It gives us what we eat.*

423 Land is rarely sold to outsiders. If a man needs money and has a buyer
432 from out of town, the civil authorities raise the money and buy the plot,
609 selling it in pieces as they find buyers. Only one small plot of land has
621 been sold to an outsider in my knowledge of the community. This plot

---

[2] See Tax (1957), Wagley (1941). Oscar Lewis (1963:125 indicates that in Tepotzlan the breakdown of the resistance to selling land was associated with a growing awareness of profits to be made in the regional and national economy.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 32]

423 432 609 621 was in a low gully where crops would not grow, and no one within the community would buy it.

423 426 Land is frequently pawned by farmers as security on a loan. The title to the land is left with the lender, who can foreclose on the debt if the interest payments of five percent per month are not paid. Often the land pawned may be worth far more than the loan. Loans in town are rarely backed with security, and if something is pawned, it is usually clothing or household items.

178 423 428 593 With the growing significance of ejido lands and land sale, inheritance of land is of less importance in the economic expectations of each successive generation. The rules controlling inheritance are theoretically simple: equal inheritance for all children regardless of sex. The parents usually give some land when the child establishes a separate household; the remainder is then given at the death of the parent or when old age makes it impossible for the parent to work any more. The youngest child remaining at home works his father's land, or if he is living with his wife's family, his father-in-law's land, until the latter's death. His family inherits the house site as well as an equal share of the privately held lands. Complications arise because of modifications of the basic rule of equal inheritance by provisions for care and maintenance of the aged parents. Frequent disputes over inheritance are settled in local courts or passed on to the Department of Indian Affairs in San Cristóbal. [692] [647]

241 The selection of which crop to grow is related to the kind and amount of land a farmer owns. The most important crops are corn, beans, and wheat. Some squash and sugarcane are grown in the lower ejido lands of San Caralampio. Cabbage is grown by one Indian who possesses fertile irrigated lands in the center. Most Indians, however, are unwilling to undertake the risk of raising a cash crop since there is greater chance of the crop being stolen and they cannot afford a bad market price when they harvest.

241 423 433 Relating the size of holding to the crop grown, according to figures in the Mexican census of 1960[3] (Table 4) one can see that in privately

---

[659] [3] The census figures are based on estimates received from town officials, who submit them monthly to the census bureau. The officials of the town question the household heads as they see them in the streets or in their houses about how much seed they planted. They then estimate what the yield per almud for good and bad land is, from their own crops.

base, so the farmers prefer to plant the better, quicker-growing corn seed 242
in a mixed sand and loam soil.

The final evaluation of land is based on results at harvest. The range of 242
variation is large: from 48 liters of yield per liter of seed to 80 litters of 433
yield per liter of seed. Township officials say that the average harvest is
five *fanegas* (1 fanega equals 12 liters) or 60 liters per liter of seed. Market [435]
prices are of less importance in deciding what crops will be planted than
are considerations of what the soil "wants" and what labor is involved.
Corn is grown on all kinds of land, whereas beans and special crops such
as cabbages can be grown only on the more fertile soil. Wheat can be
grown only where there is irrigation. One farmer raised cabbage in cooperation [434]
with a Ladino and earned 1,000 pesos, four times the amount he
earned with his wheat crop the previous year. Despite the greater return
for cabbage, the farmer did not plant it the next year when the Ladino,
who had supported the first venture, withdrew his support. The reason he
gave for this was the fact that there was more work involved and he could
not accomplish it alone: first the crop had to be planted, then transplanted,
then irrigated every three days in the early growing period, and cultivated
two or three times; every eight days he had to get rid of worms. He estimated [461]
that growing cabbage involved well over four times the amount of
work necessary for growing corn.

Labor. Most agricultural work is performed by members of 592
households with exchange or hired labor. There is no specialization of 241
labor when the work force includes two or more men since the men 476
cooperate in doing each task. Communal labor is restricted to the mainte- 464
nance of the main irrigation ditches. Each year the ditches are dug out 241
where the sides have eroded and cleaned of brush and leaves. The presi- 621 •
dent and judges unite to decide on a time for this work and announce it 476
on a loudspeaker of one of the cantinas. This usually occurs around the
twenty-fifth of December. Formerly, all the men of the community helped
in this work whether or not they owned irrigated fields. In 1958 those who [178]
did not own such land "got smart" and refused to work. [423]

In 1962 the civil officials decided that a cement canal should be installed 653
near the source of the spring. They tried to finance it with contributions 621
423
241

653 621 241 423 from all men of the township, but again they were refused by the farmers who did not own irrigated land. The officials then sold trees in the communally owned lands to support the project, which cost 2,000 pesos. The farmers without irrigated lands still bore the cost although indirectly since community resources were expended in subsidizing the work.

241 The scheduling of agricultural activities follows an annual cycle for the three major crops, corn, wheat, and beans.

243 242 *Corn*. In corn production, the greatest discrimination comes in the selection of seed.[4] Seed is chosen from cobs which have the most grain. The farmer must look carefully to see that none of it is rotten, since if one grain is bad, the entire five grains put into each hillock will rot. There are two major kinds of corn: a quick-growing variety and a slow-growing variety. The first is preferred, but not all soils "want" it. The bitter soil "wants" the slow corn which must be planted about the first of February. [177] A new corn seed introduced by some developmental engineers in 1957 yielded more grain, but it was not as flinty as the old variety and rotted quickly.

243 The soil is prepared by cross-plowing the land three times in one direction and two times in the other. Those who do not own their own oxen team do it just once because of the additional expense. In planting, the farmer is careful to measure rows evenly, five handspans between rows, and five handspans between each hillock, forming a square which permits the maximum growth of each plant. Five seeds are placed in each hillock. In hot country, the land has not been worked over as well, and as a result it cannot be measured as accurately because of rocks and trees. This upsets the agriculturalist's sense of symmetry and beauty.

Once the corn has been planted, the scheduling of activities is based on the maturation of the plant rather than on a calendrical sequence. The scheduling of activities in corn production is shown in Table 6. The starges of growth in the corn plant and the activities related to them are listed in Table 7.

Cultivation is performed twice, to kill the weeds and to pile up earth at

---

[4] The botanist Anderson (quoted in Lévi-Strauss 1966:73) points out that the careful separation of seed planted in each plot distinguished Indian from non-Indian agriculturalists in other Middle American communities.

> highly stratified primitive society, which remains static: it lacks the 423
> flexibility and mobility that exists in modern societies.

The history of the ejido program in Tzoˀontahal in the first few years 175
after it was organized in 1937 seemed to confirm this conclusion. Its 423
immediate effect was to block the flow of labor and goods in the regional 182
and national markets. The ejidatarios were no longer forced to sell their 464
labor at the prevailing rate of 25 cents a day, a wage which was not [465]
enough to supply the needs of even one man much less those of a household. Children and women formerly had to work with their husbands in the coffee fincas in order to meet their most immediate consumption needs. The independence that the ejido tract gave meant that men could withhold their own labor and that of the subordinate members of the family from such exploitation. The second harvests coming from the ejido [241]
plots in low country freed the Indians from having to buy corn in July, [435]
August, and September at the inflated market prices which took advantage of the scarcity of this basic necessity.

The political effect of the ejido in the early days was to fortify the corpo- 175
rate community against the shocks of the outside world. The first lands ac- 423
quired were primarily allotments of corporate lands alienated by the laws 621
of 1856 and 1876. Populations remained in situ, whether they were foreign Indians working on the expropriated estates, or residential communities created in the sixteenth century as crown towns.

The township of Amatenango acquired its first ejido land grant in 1937.
One of the early promoters of the ejido, a *revestido* Indian (one who has [177]
adopted western clothing) from Huistán who had been a laborer on one of the fincas within the township limits, threatened to become a rural *cacique,* or local boss, comparable to those who emerged from the agrarian revolt in the central plateau (Friedrich 1962). This leader was elected president, but during his term of office he was expelled because of his attempt to secure house plots in the center for himself and other Huistecan Indians residing in the barrio of Yetawitz (Chapter 9).

The stabilizing effects of the ejido in its earlier phase have been upset in 423
recent years. As the population of the center expanded, new families mi- 621
grated to the nearby barrios contiguous to the town center. These new set- 166

423 tlements were assigned to one of the two sections of the division in the
● 621 center with an attempt being made to maintain a demographic balance.
166 Incorporation of the new settlements was more effective in the case of the
barrios than in the case of the colonias, which were farther away from the
town center and included Indians of diverse communities. The process of
175 breaking away from the old community is illustrated by the 1961 move for
423 independence made by the original settlers of the colonia of Caralampio.
621 The following account was given by a man who was then secretary of the
661 ejido:
159

The first settlers of San Caralampio, José, Pablo, Luciano, and Santos were self-appointed principales, *or head men, of the colony. Santos and Luciano were from the town center, and José and Pablo had worked on the ranch when it was privately owned. The colony was well populated and the people lived well—there were no fights nor any problems. In 1956 the four principales decided that they should separate from the center. They told the people that if each person would contribute twenty-five pesos, they would raise the issue of the division in the* Departamento Agraria Mixta. *José invited Mateo, a man who knew how to read and write, to help them.*

"Let's divide from the town so that we alone will run the colony," he told them.

The principales took the money contributed and went to Tuxtla. There, in the Liga de Communidad Agraria *they asked for the separation, and were referred to the* Departamento Agraria Mixta. *When they arrived there with their request, the commissioner said that he would have to communicate with the chief in Mexico.*

After this, Pablo came one day to the center. He spoke to the ejido commission: "Look here, José, Luciano and Mateo went to Tuxtla."

"What for?" asked the ejido president.

"They asked for a division from the town."

"Que pendejo!" *said the president. "What happened?"*

"What do you think?" asked Pablo.

"We are against it. If it was a new center, we would support you. But

175
423
621
661
159

we are against division," said the president. "How much did you have to contribute?" he asked Pablo.

"Twenty-five pesos. They told us if we do not give money, we will be thrown out of the colonia."

We advised him that it would be better not to continue giving money to the principales. "You can't make this division," we told him.

One Sunday all the pueblo united in a mass meeting. Everyone was present. People asked about the affair of San Caralampio, and the Ejido Commission explained to them what had happened. The people said, "Let's get rid of them [the four principales of San Caralampio]."

When the three principales returned to San Caralampio from Tuxtla they asked each household head to contribute fifty pesos in order to send them to Mexico to talk personally with the Chief of the Ejido Division. Pablo came the next day to talk to the president in the center and advised them that the principales had gone out. There was another meeting. The president's decision was to get a contribution of one peso from each person in the center so that they would have six hundred pesos to prevent the division. They feared that if this occurred the people of the center couldn't work down there.

When the leaders of the central Ejido Commission had received the money, they went to the departmental capital to explain to the chief of the ejido zone what had happened. They said that the leaders of the colonia had gone to Mexico.

"Let's to go work!" said the chief. "Did you bring the money?"

"Yes, we have six hundred pesos."

"Go to the bank and change it into one-hundred-peso bills," said the chief. "Let us send two hundred pesos to the chief of the division in Mexico so that he will prevent the division."

We sent the money airmail. Before the principales of San Caralampio had arrived, we had their way blocked. Our money went to work for us. In five days, the chief in Las Casas said the money had been well received, and the leaders of San Caralampio had not been received.

A week later, Pablo came to see how the affair had proceeded. We asked Pablo if he had contributed money. He said no. We told him,

175
423
621
661
159

"Don't give any more money. The Ejido Commission won't let the division happen since we are the same pueblo."

The four principales returned from Mexico. They said that they had a paper and that an engineer would come. They asked for another contribution of 25 pesos. They said that those who wouldn't pay would be thrown out. Pablo came and told us. We told him not to be afraid. The principales now knew that Pablo was with us. He had two brothers, Pancho and Ignacio, whom he advised not to go along with the principales since he knew that they would not win the case. When the principales returned to ask for more money for their trips to Tuxtla, both brothers refused.

175
423
621
661
682
159

Since these three brothers did not cooperate, the principales got angry and decided to kill Pablo. One day, when Pablo was on his way to Teopisca, he was shot in the back. He continued riding 76 meters. The horse returned to his house. His wife ran to tell his two brothers that the horse had come home without a rider. The brothers ran out and found Pablo dead. The civil authorities of the town went. A few days passed. The brothers never asked for justice. But since they knew who did it, one of them took Pablo's 16-centimeter rifle. Pablo's wife had been thinking of selling it to pay for the expenses of the funeral. Pancho [Pablo's brother] said, "No wait. I will buy it as soon as I have money."

He borrowed it for several years. One Sunday there was an order for all of the people of San Caralampio to go to the pueblo. They got up early and wakened all the others with a horn. Pancho got up with his rifle. He went to Juan's house and shot him. Luciano had Pancho jailed in the department capitol. He declared his crime, and said that he had killed Juan because the latter had shot his brother. He made a good statement. For this reason, he got out very cheaply—1500 pesos—which he paid with his crop of beans and corn. He was in prison in San Caralampio three months. Now he lives in Teopisca. His sons go to work there, but he doesn't. One day, Pancho was shot in the back—I don't know how many centimeters the bullet penetrated, but he did not die. The brothers of Juan and José have all left the colonia.

José was the one who caused all of the trouble. His wife was the younger sister of Pablo and she left him. Now José is going around begging for food to eat.

The action of the Ejido Commission of the town reveals the knowledge 423
of how to manipulate political and economic power. By sending the 200- 621
peso bribe, they were able to block the independence movement before the 661
leadership had arrived. The extreme tactics used by the independence leaders in killing their opponents approximates the kind of political homicide characteristic of the central plateau (Friedrich 1962). The Indians of the center have been able to maintain their ejido grants intact. However, the political discrimination against residents of both colonias and barrios—no resident of either (except for the Huistecan mentioned above) has been elected president, and they never serve in any post higher than that of assistant judge—will undoubtedly lead to further unrest as the populations expand.

Bureaucratic inefficiency and corruption minimize the potential effec- 661
tiveness of the ejido organization at local, state, and national levels. Proj- 621
ects undertaken by the national government lose their effectiveness when 571
they are promoted by fraudulent claims, taking advantage of the presumed illiteracy and ignorance of the peasantry. The following case illustrates both the tactics of the ejido agents and the countertactics of the local Indians, resulting in a stalemate in the development projects planned and projected at the national level.

In August, two years ago, the Ejido Bank agents came to town with an 661
offer to lend money on crops. We didn't want to borrow it, but Francisco, 652
carbrón! [*then president of the town*], *said we should do it. "Good," we* 621
said. We accepted their terms. They said, "We will give fertilizer. It won't 571
cost you a cent. We have tried it. It will give a good crop. We will give 241
you money every six months, and you will pay the interest of nine percent. We will pay for all the costs. It won't cost you anything for the fertilizer."

In six months, when the bank agents came to get the interest, they charged us six hundred pesos for the fertilizer. We did not want to receive the second load of fertilizer. We presented our case to the Jefe *and told him, "Why did you say it would not cost anything?" He replied, "No,* muchacho [*boy*], *I told you* [*using the familiar form* te dije] *that the fertilizer is going to cost."*

We used seven bags of fertilizer on each hectare for which they charged

T
661 *us 65 pesos per bag. It was the first time we had used it and we had very*
652 *good crops. We got together and decided not to pay for the fertilizer. We*
• 621 *called the bank agents and requested that we be relieved of the charge be-*
571 *cause the crops had failed. We showed him a milpa which is a low plot*
241 *that is too wet for a good crop. We just throw the seed there, but don't*
work on it because it isn't worth the trouble.

T
[693] *We went to a lawyer in Tuxtla. He told us the bank would have to pay*
for the fertilizer since they had promised it. The lawyer is the helper of
the campesinos [*poor farmers*].

T
178 Several points of significance can be noted in this case: (1) the Indians
661 are reluctant to take credit risks because of unfortunate experiences in the
621 past; (2) they react to deception with their own deceptions, showing the
571 engineer the land which had not only not been fertilized but had never
[426] been weeded or cared for; and (3) they seek professional legal aid in deal-
[693] ing with government agents in order to equalize the contest in which they
feel disadvantaged. These first two behavioral syndromes are culturally
T
[177] conditioned responses; the third represents an innovation. By seeking
professional aid for which they pay a fee, the Indians are breaking the mo-
[178] nopoly of power held by the caciques to whom they were formerly bound
in a network of personal obligations incurred in such transactions.

M
Recent colonization of national lands since the 1950s has introduced a
423 new kind of ejido settlement. Since most of the lands contiguous to settled
361 towns were absorbed in the early days of the ejido grant, movement has
been into lands outside the domain of established centers. This sponta-
M
neous colonization of unexploited land has followed the penetration of
[491] new highways in Quintana Roo, Campeche, Chiapas, Tabasco, and Vera
Cruz (de la Peña 1951:348). In defense of their rights to the new lands, the
M
423 colonists, often of diverse origins, develop a political consciousness. Mesti-
621 zos and Indians of different towns work together in securing official ejido
563 status for their lands. Acculturation to the national language and ways of
[197] life is much greater in these mixed centers than in the settled populations
that were part of the original ejido tracts. Consciousness of their rights
M
641 under national law and independence from traditional loyalties means that
563 these new settlements may be the basis for welding Indians into the na-

tional economy and polity at a more rapid pace than has ever occurred in M 641
the past. Typical of this new movement is the recently established ejido of 563
Brindis, formed by a core of landless Indians from the town working with T 423
acculturated Indians from Teopisca. Whether the political unity which has 621
developed in the course of establishing their claim to the land will continue to provide a base for community development will depend on the encouragement and support by national institutions.

Within Indian communities of highland Chiapas, the ejido program has T
weakened age-authority principles in the family and in the civil hierarchy 423
(Day n.d., Edel n.d.). Sons are no longer primarily dependent on their fathers 621
for acquiring economic independence. Ejido Commission leaders 182
have broken the monopoly of power by a gerontocracy of principales. Out- 593
side of the community, however, the political and economic potential of the ejido has not yet been fully realized. As the new ejidos such as Brindis develop, they may break the old community boundaries that contained
and limited the power of the ejidatarios. With rising literacy, many Indians T [212]
now read the *Codigo Agraria* sold in neighboring markets, and they [641]
are increasingly conscious of their rights. If unity across township boundaries could be achieved, the new ejidos might become an effective political force in regional and national spheres.

Wage Labor and Occupational Specialties

The agriculturalists of the community do work as both exchange and T
paid laborers in the following forms: reciprocal exchange, part time labor 464
and part-time independent agricultural work, and forestry.[1] Wage work is considered only a supplement to independent self-employment for all but twenty agricultural employees who work full-time on a finca within the township.

Payments for agricultural labor within the community are lower than T 465
the prevailing rate outside of the town and are higher in the fincas of hot [184]
country than in the highlands. When men work on the fincas of landowners in the neighboring township, they prefer payment by the task (*tarea*) rather than by the day, since they can usually complete two tareas by

---

[1] See Richard N. Adams (1964:48) for a discussion of the forms of rural labor.

231 cattle was seized by bandits or soldiers. It is "new" only in the size of the
233 holdings, which have expanded from ownership of one or two head per household, primarily useful as draft animals, to a herd as large as two hundred head belonging to the wealthiest man in town. Cattle rearing is now a capital investment for resale as well as for draft animals in plow agriculture.

233 The increasing herds have stimulated competition for community
311 resources. The control of communal grazing and waterhole rights is
312 exercised through the traditional dual division of the town, with rights to
621 pasture allocated on the basis of residence in the upper or lower barrio of the
575 center. An association of cattle owners has developed in each of the sections, and the leaders of each association call together all members to clean the water holes and repair the troughs. A recent project of the cattle association of the upper section has been the erection of a large cross at the
[789] water hole. The water had dried up the year before, and the installation of the cross was an attempt to ensure a continuous supply of water in the
[796] future. The priest blessed the cross in the dedication, and the fiscal and prayer-reciters adorn it each year on May 3, the Day of the Cross in the old Catholic calendar, along with other crosses of the village.

233 Cattle grazing is the source of much of the conflict in the town. The
621 cattle roam freely in the woods and communal pasture lands, and many are
578 lost or stolen. The cattle association has not fenced in the pasture in order
575 to control it. Their tactics have been punitive; they have raised funds from
627 among members to hire men to kill suspected cattle thieves. In the last twenty years, six men have been killed as cattle thieves, and at least three of those were known to be killed by men hired by the association, which then paid the court fines to set the killers free. The leader of one of the cattle associations was killed after an incident in which he fined a man who had failed to assist in cleaning the water holes. The fine of 2 pesos per head of cattle represented a large fee for the man, who had sixty head. He refused to pay more than half, since he said he had not been notified.
[754] When his daughter later died of illness, he blamed her death on witchcraft exercised by the cattle association leader, and later killed him.

231 Cattle are only minimally exploited as a resource. The cattle are not
434 butchered locally since there is not a large enough market, but are sold to

The truck is the focus of the desire for self-improvement, for fighting 474
the Ladino monopoly of the road, for the antagonisms and factional strife 493
and conflict within the community. [182]
When they bought the truck, the Indians hired a Ladino in the neighboring town as chauffeur. One of the conditions of his employment was that he would teach his Indian assistant to drive. The Ladino tried to avoid doing this since he knew it would be the end of his job. But the Indian assistant learned by observation and is now operating the truck with an Indian assistant.

Accounts of the cost and profit of the truck operation indicated a running loss. A new tarpaulin cost 1,200 pesos; there were repairs and bribes to the highway patrol. But the truck was kept in operation because the major shareholders were impressed with the power it gave them. "They [578] [their enemies, the members of the other co-operative owned by the Ladino along with twenty members of the community] are afraid of us because of the truck," one said, and added that it was better than having a *swayohel,* the animal spirit that gives power to the curers. At the time of my last visit in 1967 the truck was making a profit. The owners were thinking of selling it and replacing it with a five-ton model.

Structural realignment has been most marked in the organization of the [621] truck-owning cooperatives. Membership cuts across the dual division for both of the truck-owning cooperatives. The cooperative is the most important factor in local political elections (Chapter 9). The truck has become both the symbol of power and the basis for the contest for power between the factions within the community.

Contraband liquor. The number of distillers has grown in the last 273 ten years from five to forty. The distillation process was learned by Indians from Ladinos in neighboring towns fifteen years ago. [177] [415] There has been no local innovation in the basic process, but a new item, used in distillation, has been introduced into pottery production, a funnel decorated in the traditional manner of the water jars and other vessels. The capital 273 472 investment in the equipment for operating the still is put up by individuals or partnerships of relatives. The still is rented to people who have 602 charge of the celebration for a saint's day, or who are involved in courtship.

Private enterprise is the favored form of organization of the distillers be- 273 472

273
472 cause of the limited capital involved and the fear of discovery with the expansion
of the enterprise. A loose syndicate of distillers provides an insurance
273 protection by raising fines for members who are apprehended by federal
548 agents. Security measures are taken to avoid discovery, and the presence
661 of a federal agent is announced in Tzeltal on the loudspeaker system
of one of the bars. One federal agent is on the payroll of the four operating
bar owners, who give him 5 pesos a week to avoid legal action on the
sale of contraband liquor. Individual distillers pay the tariff of 10 pesos or
two liters of liquor a year to the civil officials and to the ejido commission,
a tariff justified by the fact that they use wood from communally owned
land to cook the sugar. The syndicate is a community-wide organization,
mobilized in emergencies only.

THE NEW SOCIAL RESOURCES

177 In the course of operating the new enterprises, knowledge of and experience
178 with supralocal institutions and agents are developing social resources
43 in (1) entrepreneurship, (2) management of capital and credit,
44 (3) knowledge of markets, and (4) dealing with government agencies. In
621 entering into these new economic activities, the Indians have not lost a
156 sense of belonging to the local community. Self-identification as poor, indigenous
farmers is both a screen of protection and a means of ensuring
continuity with local control systems.

472 *Entrepreneurship*. Local entrepreneurs explain their motivation in
621 a rhetoric which emphasizes their interest in community welfare. This validates
156 entering into nontraditional activities, but retaining their position in
local society inhibits the expansions of their activities. The case of Santos,
159 the promoter of the trucking cooperative is instructive. Santos had picked
472 up some accounting techniques while he served in the army in Michoacán.
621 He returned to the village because his father walked from Chiapas
45 to Michoacán to tell him he should come back and get married. When
he returned, he kept careful account of his costs and returns from the
milpa. He realized soon that it wasn't "worth his work" (the Indian has
not as yet learned the idiom or the value system which goes into the

phrase "worth my time"). He therefore persuaded a Ladino of Teopisca 159
to lend him 5,000 pesos. He went down to hot country and bought corn 472
when it was scarce in the village, brought it up the hill, sold a little to pay 621
for his needs, but held the rest until the price went up in the next three 45
months. In a two year period of buying and selling with his 5,000 peso investment, he grossed 400,000 pesos. Afterwards he began to hire men to work in his milpa. At a meeting of the cooperative association in 1966, Santos defended his investments of the association's funds by showing his carefully kept accounts. He held up his pencil saying proudly, "This is my machete! This is my hoe!" The phrasing is an imitation of Ladino rhetoric of the provinces.

Santos served as treasurer of the ejido commission and of the town. In 159
1965 he was made a *nič'nal martoma,* or junior religious official in charge 472
of caring for the saints. His appointment was an attempt made by the 621
former president, a member of the Ladino-owned trucking concern, to cut 794
down Santo's operations in passenger traffic on Sunday by keeping him 45
occupied in religious activities. While in office, Santos began an enquiry into the use of the funds collected in donations to the saints. The priest had gained control over these funds, and had not subjected the collection to the public review and accounting procedures by which funds had been handled by the civil administration. Santos demanded an explanation by
the priest, who refused to make a statement. The issue was raised in a [623]
general assembly of the men of the community which occurs sporadically on Sundays. Meanwhile Santos was taking advantage of the money associated with each of the major saints. In the cargo system for the care of saints, a fund of money is passed over in the installation ceremony from the outgoing mayordomos to the incoming mayordomo. This fund has always been passed over to the incoming officials with an increment of about 10 pesos. Santos requested the use of these funds to "make them grow," and he thus gained uncontested access to low interest funds which he used in his brokerage activities. In addition to the interest, he gave a gift of clothing to the saint to maintain good credit relations.

Santos' administration of funds in his public capacity as town treasurer, 159
storekeeper, and treasurer of both the ejido commission and the truck 472
cooperative won him a reputation of honesty and reliability. His knowl- 621
45

159 edge not only of how to manage money, but also of how to *manejarlo*, or
472 drive it, and to "make it grow" indicated an insight into capital operations
621 which made him a leader in local enterprises. In his post as shopkeeper, he
45 invested the store's capital in corn bought at harvest.

159 Santos' career as an entrepreneur was ended when a bullet was fired
472 into his back in 1966. He had relaxed his observation of the rules which permit survival for those who challenge traditional ways: no drinking, no trips to the mountain alone, and no boasting of gains. As yet, he has had no parallel in the community, but the truck drivers are becoming aware of the possibilites for profit in trade and commercial deals.

426 *Capital and credit.* The Indians' knowledge of capital and credit
609 operations has been acquired in the role of debtor, not creditor. In the leg-
538 ends concerning money the creditor is an outsider, a *pukuh* or devil, usually a Ladino. I had accepted a story about a Don Klabil, owner of a mountain in the town adjacent to the neighboring Ladino town Teopisca, as being of ancient origin. It fit with the many stories collected in Mesoamerica of owners of the hills who give out money on request to those who come knocking at the entrances to their caves. After their death, the recipients spend their spirit life in the mountain, working off the debt. Don Klabil was said to be responsible for the wealth of one of the outstandingly wealthy men in town who had gone to his hill and asked for cattle and money. Once while riding in a bus from Tzoˀontahal to Las Casas, I was engaged in conversation with a woman of Teopisca, who was dressed in widow's weeds. I commented on the story of Don Klabil as we passed the hill, and she said, "Oh, yes. That was Don David, my husband. He used to lend money to the Indians." When he died, the Indians say he went to live in the cave from which he got money when he was alive.

The Indians feel at a disadvantage to Ladinos when they enter into capital and credit operations. They tell a story of how, many years ago, when all the Indians of Tzoˀontahal were rich, the mayordomos got drunk on *Paswamal,* the day of gathering flowers and greens to decorate the church. When the true day of the fiesta came, they looked about them and realized that the church was undecorated, so they strewed green peso notes on the floor of the church. The Ladinos from Teopisca came for the fiesta as

usual, and seeing the pesos, picked them up. The "spirit of the money" left 426
the village forever. The story reveals not only the sense of deprivation In- 609
dians feel in losing wealth to Ladinos (historically land the Indians had 538
lost through fraud or legal trickery during the Porfirio Diaz period), but
also their realization of their own responsibility for letting their assets slip
out of their control.

Payment of interest on money borrowed is justified in the calculations 426
of the Indians for loans made within as well as outside of the community. 621
Interest, called *shol tak'in*, or "head" of money, makes it possible for the 602
borrower to work, and thus to earn, so the "owner" has the right to charge
for the use. The rate on loans made within the pueblo has risen from 2 or
3 pesos a month for 100 pesos to 5 pesos, thus equalizing the rate with that
charged in the neighboring Ladino town. The same rate is applied be-
tween relatives as nonkin. The advantage of intracommunity borrowing
is that the lender does not demand an immediate return, or as high secu-
rity. Ladinos of the neighboring town tend to demand items of greater
value than the debt held as security—one Ladino held title to land worth
1,000 pesos for a 50-peso debt, and threatened to foreclose. Within the [571]
pueblo, security of about the same value as the loan is asked except in the
case of neighbors and relatives who can be reminded every day of the
debt. And they are.

Markets. In marketing, the Indians of Tzoʔontahal have neither 442
extended nor gained control over the selling and buying operations that 443
have been pursued since before the opening of the Pan-American High-
way in 1955. The pottery which is produced locally was formerly carried 178
on horseback to the smaller towns within a radius of fifty miles. The pot- 323
tery was marketed directly by the men of the household which produced 442
it, with no specialization in trading by commercial travelers, as had hap- 443
pened in the Zapotec and other areas of Mexico. Since the penetration of [492]
the Pan-American Highway, the men take the pottery produced in their [462]
households by bus or on the trucks to either San Cristóbal or Comitán. [494]
This tends to polarize trading operations and dry up the traffic into small
towns not connected by the highway. As a result, the wholesale trade in
San Cristóbal and Comitán has increased in the past decade, with dealers

474 The strategies the cooperative members have developed in their frequent
648 tangles with state police illustrate the combination of custom and innovation.
661 When caught red-handed, they may respond by playing the stereotype
Indian role. "We don't know anything. We are just poor Indians. How do you expect us to do what the law says?" This is hard for the Ladino authorities to resist, since it feeds their own sense of superiority. But it does not always work, and so the Indians have devised secondary resources. They put the departmental police at each terminal of their usual route between Las Casas and Comitán on a regular monthly mordida
[693] payroll of 50 pesos each. When trying to extend their operations, they hire a
lawyer. A recent coup has been the acquisition of a permit to truck corn from Villa las Rosas and other ejido settlements that have been recently colonized. The appeal was made on the basis that they are a nonprofit cooperative of ejidatarios. With the permit, they now undercut the price of their own competitors in the town as well as of the large companies.
474 Lawyers are beginning to advertise themselves in newspapers as "Friends of
693 the Indians" and are in some cases specializing in this new patronage,
which they receive from other communities as well as Tzoˀontahal. The professional relationship bypasses personal ties which formerly limited the development of Indian leadership.

177 The self-development occurring in Tzoˀontahal may appear paradoxical
178 if we do not understand the internal dynamics by which change is contained
474 within an existing equilibrium. The cooperative association has
• 621 been adopted as a technique for socializing the risk of making a profit.
648 The truck, although currently used in an uneconomic operation, is a symbol
[493] of power in the struggle for a position in the regional markets and in
the intracommunity factional strifes. The usual patron-client system is being reversed as the Indian puts the Ladino on his payroll to secure evasion from the law. In the changes which are occuring, the defensive structure of the corporate community is a means by which the Indians are entering into national life not on the lowest rung of the social ladder, but on terms they are setting for themselves. In the new enterprises, the Indians combine old ploys with new strategies. Confronted with legal threats from the outside world, they play the colonial game of defensive ignorance.

When this fails, they turn to the professional help of lawyers rather than 177
to the old caciques with whom they had formerly maintained patron- 178
client relations. The traditional structural alignment of upper and lower 474
barrios is retained as the basis for organizing the growing cattle herds, but 693
the cooperative provides flexibility and power for developing new enterprises. 621 ●

The minimal changes in the material environment and the technology 177
of the peasantry are countered by the development of social resources 178
which should facilitate Indian integration in the wider society. In operating 472
the new enterprises independently of Ladino control, they are developing entrepreneurial skills and an awareness of the relationship between capital and profit. The restriction of their operations to nonproductive use of capital for profit, such as buying crops at harvest and reselling as the price rises, reveals the limited dynamics of intracommunal development. The town will look to the regional and national networks for fundamental changes in its economy.

The fear of exciting envy acts as a brake on productive activity and the 626
enjoyment of improved consumption resulting from wealth. Santos' death 182
is a symbolic warning to others who would follow in his footsteps. An ear- 472
lier case occurred when the ejido land grants were made in the 30s: 556

> *The brothers Ča?iletik became "very rich" as a result of careful opera-* 556
> *tion of their ejido and privately owned land. They owned ten pair of oxen* 433
> *and about fifty horses. When they brought in their crops on horseback, it* 423
> *looked like a line of ants. They built a good house in Alkob', and a good* 621
> *threshing shelter. The people of the town began to talk about getting* 626
> *them off the land. The ejido commissioner took their land away and* 159
> *turned it over to others in the town. Until this day, the brothers Ča?iletik are without land. Now they do no more than work like other men. They live poorly. All their cattle and horses are sold.*

The organization of the cooperatives is one means of diverting envy di- 474
rected against individuals and permitting some increase in productive ef- 182
forts, but the society still lacks the means of validating higher consump- 626
tion standards. The richest man in town eats better than his neighbors, 556
000

556
626 but his style of living is indistinguishable from theirs. The only difference
[231] is the larger number of dogs he[1] keeps to guard his wealth stored in the
form of surplus crops in the eaves of his house.

177 The kind of economic change occurring in Tzoʔontahal fits the model
178 of a moving equilibrium. Tightly controlled behavioral schema preserve
433 the traditional productive activities in pottery and agriculture. They pro-
434 vide the framework into which the new enterprises are fit. Increasing de-
621 pendence of cosumption choices on external markets is slowly transform-
323 ing the content but not the pattern of community life. This kind of change is limited to societies that form a distinct corporate group. In an open society where many alternatives are available, the painful process of accommodation of the new to a customary pattern would probably not be undertaken given the tendency for social change to follow the course of least resistence. The absorption of economic innovation in Tzoʔontahal illustrates the ability of closed corporate communities to participate in commercial undertakings and reformulate them to fit their own pattern.

[1] [i.e., the richest man in town. - Analyst]

Chapter 4

Family Authority and Community Control

All residents of the center consider themselves to be "true men" descended 186
from the ancestors who lived in the cave. In Murdock's terminology 621
(1965:63), the Indian community constitutes a *deme,* or local group of genealogically 626
related residents who cannot trace the exact kinship tie. This [614]
sense of kinship sustains a model of paternal authority for assigning positions
of power and prestige in the wider community. The key to persistence
of the Indians as a culturally distinct population lies in these age-ordered
hierarchies sanctioned by the ancestors and the elders who act as
their intermediaries. The reward for remaining within the social control
system is security and the right to their guardianship; the sanction against
violating the norms is exile or exposure to the evil spirits they hold at bay.

The bilateral extension of age-relative collateral terms to all members of 621
the same side of the dual division is a successful adaptation of the kinship 601
model to the government of a compact nucleated community. The system
of terminology is similar to that of the neighboring nucleated settlement
of Aguacatenango which shares many of the same features of behavior
(Hunt n.d., Metzger in Romney 1967:231). These systems are closer to 621
those of the Coatlan Mixe (Merrifield and Hoogshagen 1961) and the 601
Chinantec of Palantla (Merrifield 1959) than they are to the nearby Tzeltal-speaking 171
communities of Cancuc (Guiteras Holmes 1947) and Oxchuk
(Villa Rojas 1947). In the case of the Mixe and Chinantec, the strong emphasis
on relative age is correlated with age-graded positions in the political-religious
hierarchy (Merrifield 1959, Merrifield and Hoogshagen [613]
1961:225).[1] The lineage-clan pattern found in the vacant center, or *paraje,* [614]

---

[1] In the Coatlán, Oaxaca case of Mixe Indians cited by Merrifield and Hoogshagen [601]
(1961) they state that the classificatory terms utilizing the criteria of age relative to ego [171]

613
614 type of communitives such as Oxchuk and Cancuc depends on communal
621 land holding and contiguity in residence of the agnatic kin. The corporate
171 identity of these groups is breaking down with the fragmentation of land
601 holdings and movement of men from the paraje of their fathers (Guiteras Holmes 1947, Villa Rojas 1946).

601
602 Symmetrical bilateral extension of kinship terms can be seen in Figure 3. Relative age modifies generation in terms for collaterals. In ego's generation, older brother and sister are distinguished from younger siblings. In parents' generation, siblings of father younger than father are referred to and called elder brother or sister, and those older than father are called father or mother. In grandparent's generation, siblings older than grandparent are called grandfather or grandmother, and those younger than grandparent are called father and mother. If the grandparent should die, leaving only a younger sibling, the term grandparent is used referentially and vocatively. There is no sex distinction made between siblings or collaterals younger than ego in the referential terminology. Referential terminology [193] for lineals younger than ego does not make sex distinctions, but the distinction may be made with one's own children by using the possessive form of the vocative term, such as "my little man" (*htatil*) or "my little woman" (*ḳantzil*). Women refer to their children with the term *ʔalal*. The stem *ʔal* signifies the verb to give birth. Men refer to their children as *nič'an*. The collective term for children of both parents combines the two terms in a possessive form, *ḳalnič'an*, our children.

The bilateral system of Amatenango is not in conformity with the Spanish model. Along with similar systems mentioned for Aguacatenango, Coatlan, and Palantla, it differs from the Spanish model in that collaterals in ascending generations are classified with lineal relatives, and age relative to ego modifies generational separation. These systems appear to be an [174]

---

[601]
[171] obscures that of generation. Just as in Tzoʔontahal, all members of the community address others they meet on the street with the term indicating age relationship to ego, and grandfather and grandmother terms are reserved for the very old. The authors conclude that this terminological behavior reflects the rigid age-grading found in social groups throughout the community. I would venture a generalization that requires further research to the effect that age-grading provides a pattern for appropriate behavior among members of endogamous, closely settled communities whereby conflict is reduced by channeling competition for prestigeful positions.

608 571 members of the me^ʔ^iltatil along with relatives and sometimes neighbors. They are his sponsors at subsequent life crises—rituals of betrothal, marriage, and death. All of these people become co-parents to each other and to the child's parents. This relationship lasts throughout his and their lifetime. If the marriage bond is threatened, the meʔiltatil gather to hear the complaints and try to resolve the problems. When a person dies, his meʔiltatil go to his wake to watch over his spirit. He in turn is expected to help in the household of his meʔiltatil when they have a ceremony by bringing wood or serving food and drink to guests.

624 561 2. Civil officials: The civil officials as a group may also be called the meʔiltatil; the term has special reference to the judges who represent the ancestors in their judgment of wrongdoers. In their passage through office from lower to higher positions, they are ranked in age-graded sets of junior officials (policemen), senior officials (regidores), and elder officials (judges), with the highest respect in ceremonial occasions accorded to the principales, two men, one from each side of the dual division, selected from those who have served in all offices. Drinking order, marching order, and seating order reflect the age-ordered rank in all ceremonial occasions.

[192] 571 • 621 602 794 608 The link between the meʔiltatil of the household and the meʔiltatil of the civil authority is provided by a group of officials called the *nak̜awanehetik̜*. These men are chosen from among bilaterally related relatives, ritual co-parents, and neighbors who have served in office in the church or the town hall and know the prayers. They direct ceremonies in the house at times of baptism, betrothal, death, and when the household head enters a community office. They are the ones who know how the ancestors did things and "watch and see" that all is done in accord with custom. They instruct the new official in the prayers he [574] must memorize. Their wives direct the preparation of food by the younger women, and one of them may serve as chief woman speaker greeting guests.

621 756 561 3. Curers: Curers are similarly ranked according to age and years in practice. The elder curer on each side of the dual division is charged with guarding his side against the intrusion of evil spirits in the form of his own animal spirit. It is in this function of guardianship that the curers are referred to as meʔiltatil.

The meʔiltatil is the core institution preserving cultural continuity in 182
the community. The exercise of authority and social control depended on 621
a system of checks and balances in which the ancestors watched over the 602
community, the judges watched over the curers to see that they did not 608
abuse their power, and the curers watched over their side of the dual divi- 571
sion to see that no witches or evil spirits caused harm. The validation of
power is based on the kinship model of age-authority. The recruitment
and functions of each of the three manifestations of this ancestral author-
ity will be discussed in the following chapters on life crisis rituals, curing,
and civil government.

THE HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY 592

The household unit is a crystallization at a given point in time of consanguineously and affinally related people within a wider kinship matrix. It is the most important structural unit providing for economic cooperation, socialization of the young, and care and sustenance of the aged. It provides the setting and the personnel for the transmission of traditional prayers and ritual procedures of the civil and religious hierarchy. The composition of the unit is constantly changing due to internal changes in the life cycles of its members as well as changes in the wider kinship matrix. The decisions made in response to these changes reveal both traditionally established adjustments to life crises and adaptations to social changes originating outside the family. The kinds of choices made in residence after marriage as well as in inheritance and succession to leadership in the household do not always conform to the cultural formulae for handling them. The exigencies of space, time, economic, and social considerations may outweigh the ideological considerations of what ought to be done.

The formula for the developmental cycle of the household is the follow- 591
ing: when a man marries, he lives with his bride's family for one year,
working in her father's fields. He then returns to his father's household to
live and work with him until his father is too old to manage the work in
the field. The father then gives equal shares of his land and animals to [425]
each of his children, both male and female. The youngest child, or the last 591
one to get married, remains in the parental house, taking care of the aged 593

602 Kinship is one of several bases for recruiting reciprocal or cooperative
476 labor. Table 19 compares kinship with nonkinship-defined work groups
626 in terms of the kinds of exchanges, the type of work done, the time span
permitted for reciprocity, and the sanctions against failure to reciprocate.

TABLE 19. Labor Exchanges of Kinship- and Nonkinship-Defined Groups

Conditions	*Within household*	*Beyond household, within community*	
		With kin (ritual, compadre, affinal and consanguineal)	*With nonkin*
Interchange	"Cooperation"—reciprocity based on implicit understandings	Reciprocity—explicit, defined by traditional expectations	Reciprocity—explicit, often defined by contract as well as tradition
Sanctions	Authority of elder member, male in men's work group, female in women's work group	Authority of elders of bilaterally-extended kin group; Recourse to cabildo if no strong elder	Informal—fear of gossip of neighbors; formal—reliance on local judges and president or recourse to district courts
Time Span	Extended, indefinite	Extended, usually some defined limit on repeated tasks (harvest); no limit for nonrepeated tasks (housebuilding)	Immediate return expected, or explicitly stated time allowance
Kind of Task	Pottery-making, milpa agriculture, care of cattle, preparation of food	Ploughing, cultivating, harvesting, firing pottery, housebuilding	Same.

593 Fathers and sons, or sons-in-laws may work together on family-owned
476 property. Because all men can acquire ejido land after marriage, and since
423 47 percent of the households claim to have only this land, the cooperative
621 tie between fathers and sons is not based on inheritance. If they work well
[606] together, they may continue to cooperate after the son has become independent.
476 Father and sons, brothers and brothers-in-law are expected to
342 cooperate with each other in building a house, rethatching a roof, and
607 threshing wheat. In the case of house-building or maintenance, they must
593 pay for a substitute if they are unable to fulfill the obligation.
241

Compadres, or ritual kin, are the next most important pool from which 476
to draw assistance. The same restrictions on exchanges between actual kin 608
apply to those between ritual kin. The one task which is confined to broth- [342]
ers and not extended to compadres is that of house-building. [593]

Relationships between members of the household are defined by daily 592
work tasks, commensality, sharing a living space, and participation in the 601
same ceremonial events. The same rules which govern behavior in the 621 •
family are extended to the wider community. The extension of the terms
elder brother and elder sister, father and mother, and younger sibling to
all of the people in one's own side of the dual division implies a pattern
of behavior similar to that of the family. The fundamental equation in so- 571
cial relations is age-respect-deference-prestige. 561

The bilaterally extended kinship group provides the pattern structuring 602
relations throughout the community. It is a framework allowing wide 476
choice in selecting individuals with whom ceremonial and work relations 561
are contracted. Relative age has superseded generation and descent as the principle governing relationships of authority and respect from the nuclear family to the hierarchy or community officials. These patterns will be traced in other institutions in following chapters.

774
in the house in which he lives. The midwife, the only person present be- 852
sides the mother, performs the ritual. She puts cold water in the child's [769]
mouth and then goes to the door, saying, "Enter if you arrive, little boy
[or little girl]." Then she brushes the child with pine branches dipped in
springwater, and smokes with incense of pitch pine the clothing which is
then put on the child. The incense "makes a path for the soul to find the
body of the child." As she does this, she says, "May your heart be one now
that you are in the house." This ceremony is always performed when the
child is born outside his parents' residence is order to guide his soul to its
proper locale. Three days later, a ceremony called *sti? mut* (eat the [192]
chicken) takes place. Only women attend this meal. In one case I ob-
served, the child's mother, her three sisters, mother, and husband's cousin
attended. Each woman brings a peso's worth of bread, some chocolate, and
ten tortillas. Two hens are cooked in boiling water, and the food is eaten
by the women.

Baptism, called "throw the water" (*?ič ha?*) occurs as soon as possible 852
after the new-born child's twentieth day of life. If the parents of the child [591]
live with either the mother's or the father's family, the grandparents will [603]
choose the godparent, or *padrino*. The actual decisions recorded for four [608]
families in Table 20 can be compared with statements of preference as to
who should be godparents. People say they prefer nonrelatives ("We are 852
not deceived by them"), people of the same section of the dual division 608
("We like to greet them in the street") and finally people of good reputa-
tion. The individual or couple chosen as godparent becomes *compadre* or
co-parent to the parents of the child.

People seem to be successful in realizing the preferences they state. 81 [621]
percent of compadres are chosen from their own side of the dual division,
and only 4 percent are chosen from out of town. 71 percent of compadres
are chosen from among nonrelatives. A significant factor in the choice of
compadres is maintaining good neighbor relations. Most families surround [754]
themselves with a ring of compadres which neutralizes both the fear of
being the object of witchcraft and of being accused of witchcraft. Factors [554]
of wealth, prestige, and status positions—particularly that of fiscal—are
also taken into consideration in choosing a compadre. Most of the padri-
nos of baptism are chosen from among older members of the community,

TABLE 20. Relationship of Individual to Compadres

		Residence of compadre					*Relationship*		
Informant's family status	*Occasion*	*Same section*	*Opposite section*	*Other barrio*	*Neighboring town*	*Total*	*Relative*	*Non-relative*	*Total*
65-year-old man, wife, 5 grown children	Baptism of godchild	13	5			18		18	18
	Wedding	31				31	12	19	31
	Baptism of own child	3			2	5		5	5
	Total	47	5		2	54	12	42	54
42-year-old man, wife, adopted daughter	Baptism of godchild	12	1			13	2	11	13
	Wedding	13	3	5		21	6	15	21
	Confirmation		2			2		2	2
	Blessing of loudspeaker	2			2	4		2	2
	Total	27	6	5	2	40	8	30	38
35-year-old man, wife, 5 children	Baptism of godchild	7				7	4	3	7
	Baptism of own child	4			1	5		5	5
	Wedding	4				4		4	4
	House saint	2				2	1	1	2
	Total	17			1	18	5	13	18
34-year-old widow	Baptism of godchild	17	1	1		19	15	4	19
	Wedding	7	3			10	2	8	10
	House saint	2	1		1	4	1	3	4
	Confirmation	1				1	1		1
	Total	27	5	1	1	34	19	15	34
	TOTAL	118	16	6	6	146	44	100	144

602
608
671
852
621
795
585

The links between members of the meʔiltatil of a couple united in mar- 571
riage are reinforced if another marriage occurs between the two house- 581
holds. While this does not provide a basis for prescribed or preferred mat- 608
ing, those who have such exchanges say they prefer it because the negotiations in the č̓om proceed more amicably, especially in the earlier stage.

Solidarity of the group is reinforced when the meʔiltatil are called upon 593
to help settle conflicts that arise in the marriage. The household review of 578
marital conflict requires a formal gathering of all the members of the be- 608
trothal party who represented both the husband and the wife. Parents of 571
the couple state the evidence and recite the events which led up to the con- [621]
flict. The husband or wife may interject, speaking in their own defense. The elders suggest how the person judged guilty (usually the man) ought to behave and what his reponsibilities are. A transcription of one such case is included in Appendix 1A. This concerns a couple who had separated two years after the marriage. The following statement of the padrino of the wedding ceremony, speaking in lieu of the leader of the č̓om who could not be present, shows the techniques they use to adjust relations:

> *Now he [the husband] wants to change for the better. You [speaking to the husband] ought not to drink. It is better to eat meat and vegetables and find corn and beans for your wife and child. Now we have arranged it, and you can take your wife and child to your house.*

A successful outcome depends on all people in the dispute accepting the 593
judgment of the elders. If this cannot be achieved, the abused partner 578
seeks redress in the courts. Women are most frequently the plaintiffs. The 608
plaintiff is supported by her parents who appear with her in court and 571
help argue her case. The defendant may appear with his parents, if they 692
support him, but very often they feel shame and do not.

In court cases, two judges hear the evidence and they, along with the president and other civil officials deliver the verdict. The quality of interpersonal relations does not differ much from that which one finds in the household review, as can be seen in comparing the court review included in Appendix 1B with the household review. In the former case, the woman's wrath had been aroused by her husband occasionally returning to his first wife, and by his failure to give her money for expenses. Since he

Chapter 6

Curing and the Curers

Sickness is a sign of upset relations between the spirits or people and those 753
of relatives, neighbors, or places. In the curing ritual, the curers not only 756
treat the disease, but also try to bring about spiritual readjustment by 182
dramatizing the ill effects of animosity. Because they claim to be able to [578]
counteract witchcraft, the curers exercise a great deal of power. This
power is limited by institutional requirements controlling entry into the
profession and exercise of their skill and knowledge. The breakdown in [178]
the authority of elder curers during my study of the community, and their
attempts to reinstate themselves, made explicit some of the structural principles
of the institution.

The Curing Hierarchy

756
Recruitment into the hierarchy. Until the 1950s, each side of the 621
dual division had an age-ranked order of curers and recognized the leadership 178
of a single elder, called *statal ʔuʔul*. The older, more experienced curers,
called the *b'anḳilal,* or elder brothers, had authority over the novice
curers, called the *ʔihtz'inal,* or younger brothers. With the breakdown of
the hierarchy during my stay, this distinction was becoming less clear. In [114]
1964 there were seven curers in Alannantik and six in Ahk'olnantik; on a
return visit I made in 1967, their numbers had been reduced by homicide
and exile to five in Alannantik and five in Ahk'olnantik.

Entry into the profession occurs during an epidemic when the civil authority 756
calls upon the curers to gather in the town hall to determine who 731
is bringing the "heat" that causes death from disease. The curers decide
whether there are any promising young men who have the third soul,
swayohel, which gives them the ability to cure. If a young man is deemed

"He looked for trouble!" Domingo replied. 159
I said, "You killed my husband!" 756
He said, "It was not I! It was not I!" 578
It doesn't serve to enter curing early. People will kill you right away. 683
Another young man wanted to enter. The curers did not permit him since they said he was a witch. People heard he was a witch, and they killed him. He was the same age as my husband [about twenty-seven].

The curers who have survived to an old age were introduced into the 756
profession by an elder relative. They choose their clients carefully, refusing [621]
to cure a man who is on the point of death, and remaining within their own section of the dual division. These rules of survival are ignored by some of the younger men who wish to impress their elders with their powers.

The changing image of the curers. The curers of today are unfa- 756
vorably compared with those of the past who used their power for good. 776
The prototype of the old curer was the fearful Tatik Čaʔuk, Lord of the [178]
Lightning, possibly a local manifestation of the Maya god Chac.[2] The dialectic of power is exemplified in his control over beneficial and destructive forces. His beneficence is demonstrated in his ability to bring rain to crops, while his vengeance is revealed in lightning bolts which can kill people and destroy houses. Anyone who is struck by lightning is believed to have had some sin for which the Tatik Čaʔuk has punished him. His destructive force is equated with a rifle—called "the elder brother of the Lord of Lightning"—and with the "heat" which brings death in illnesses. His habitation is believed to be the Cave of the Star where the heat which causes epidemics is found.

The curers were intermediaries for the Tatik Čaʔuk in their control over both destructive and beneficial forces. Formerly, the swayohel of the curers patrolled the streets of the town to prevent the entry of evildoers
bringing heat. It is in this role that they are referred to as me'iltatil. If an 756
epidemic occurred, the two leading curers from each side of the town con- 731

---

[2] In other Tzeltal- and Tzotzil-speaking communities, the god Čaʔuk is named as the chief figure from pre-Conquest theology (Hermitte 1964, Holland 1963:93). [171]

Chapter 7

The Formal Organization of Local Government

The formal organization of civil and religious offices in Tzoʔontahal is 621 •
based on the pattern of a locally independent, democratically elected 177
officialdom introduced by the Spaniards. Variations in the pattern from 178
that of other towns of the highlands have resulted from differences of interpretation
of the functions, the range of power, and the course of succession
of offices. This flexibility has preserved structural continuity as organizational
adjustments are made. The Indians have transformed an alien
governing mechanism into one that meets their changing needs and contributes
to their independence in the modern world.

The independence of the local township has a base in the pre-Conquest 632
social organization of Chiapas. Robert Adams (1961:347) has noted the 178
absence of architectural or other features indicative of functional specialization
that would arise in a politically integrated region. At the time of 175
the Conquest, Chiapas was divided into warring principalities, revealing 632
the extreme political fragmentation of the area (Calnek 1962:8). Each 628
town was divided from the neighboring town by *mojones,* hilled-up [131]
boundaries (ibid:36). A minimum of political unity was achieved by holding [621]
certain towns subject to the dominance of others (ibid:27); local autonomy [428]
persisted, however, in the administration of landholding as a community
enterprise.

During the colonial period the Spanish Crown established the independence 175
of towns directly under their control and provided them with a civil- 632
religious hierarchy which has persisted as the form of government to the 177
present (Carrasco 1961: Wolf 1957b). 621

Comparative studies of the civil-religious hierarchy indicate the range of 171
621

621
171

variation on the Spanish colonial model (Camara 1952; Cancian 1963, 1965; Carrasco 1961; Siverts 1964; Tax 1964). In the many community studies of the highland Maya, we have reports of the roles and functions of the hierarchy as they are played out in a specific context (Adams 1957; Bunzel 1952; Guiteras Holmes 1961; La Farge 1947; La Farge and Byers 1931; MacArthur 1961; M. Nash 1955; Siverts 1960, 1964; Valladares 1957;

621
794

Fig. 6. Civil and Religious Officials *

Officials in the town hall
- President
- Secretary
- Síndico

Officials in the church
- Fiscal
- Women Prayer-reciters

Principales (Krinsipaletik)
- Second Principal
- First Principal

Judges (Alkaletik)
- First Judge, Alannantik
- Second Judge, Ahk'olnantik
- Assistant Judge, La Grandeza
- Assistant Judge, Madronal

Regidores (Rehiroletik)
- First Regidor
- Second Regidor
- Third Regidor
- Fourth Regidor

Policemen (Mayoletik)
- 2 First Police
- 2 Second Police
- 2 Third Police
- 2 Fourth Police
- 2 Last Police

Cofrades (Kobrarietik)
- Cofrade of Sacramento
- Cofrade of Santa Lucía
- Cofrade of San Pedro the Martyr
- Cofrade of San Francisco

Mayordomos (Martomaetik)
- Mayordomo of Christ of Ascension
- Mayordomo of San Antonio
- Mayordomo of Virgin Rosario
- Mayordomo of San José
- Mayordomo of Santiago

Alfereces † (Alperesetik)
- First Past Alférez
- Remains Past Alférez
- Second Past Alférez
- New Alférez

Assistants to cofrades (alib'aletik)
- Assistant to Sacramento
- Assistant to Virgin Santa Lucía

Assistants to elders for lesser saints (Nič'aniletik)

* Boxed-in terms refer to age-graded hierarchies. Other posts are outside of this "ladder" as explained in text.

† Alfereces may be chosen after taking higher posts in the religious hierarchy, but cannot become first or second regidor before serving in this post.

Vogt 1965; Wagley 1949; Wisdom 1940; Zabala 1961). Comparison of the 621
structure and functioning of the hierarchy reveals differing applications of 171
the same principles of allocating roles (age, sex, territorial identification, and previous service) and differing assignments of the same tasks (administrative, judgment, and maintenance).

In this chapter, I shall analyze the civil-religious hierarchy in Tzoˀont- 128
ahal as a formally prescribed system of roles and behavior. The data on 621
which the analysis is based are: (1) the system of roles and the principles 794
of allocation, (2) careers in office of household heads, (3) instrumental behavior prescribed for officials, and (4) ritual behavior. The following chapter will be concerned with the exercise of power within the limits set by the formal organization of offices.

THE MATRIX OF ROLES

Civil officials. Civil offices in Tzoˀontahal are a segmented, 621
ranked set of posts, each of which has an internally age-graded ranking. 561
Outside of these segments are two leadership positions, those of president and his assistant, *síndico,* which are not controlled by the same criteria of entry—service in lower posts of the civil and religious hierarchies and age. Multiple posts at the same level have equal representation of officials from the upper and lower divisions of the center, Ahk'olnantik and Alannantik, and single posts are held alternately by residents of each side. Theoretically, the post of president should alternate as well, but in fact the scarcity of qualified candidates limits consideration of this condition. Since 1948, of the twelve presidents, only four were from Ahk'olnantik.

The four ranked segments (Fig. 6) from higher to lower are *krinsipale-* [693]
tik, or principales, *alkaletik,* or judges, *rehiroletik,* or regidores, and *mayoletik,* or policemen. The relative rank of the post is expressed in terms of its power, and the relative rank of the post-holder in terms of age (the term used to describe an older office holder, *mas mamališ,* has the extended meaning of greater power [1]). Age-ranking of officials complements

---

[1] Siverts (1965) points out that in Cancuk the term *mamal,* or elder, was applied to a young man who held a post of high authority because of his skills in literacy and language. By terminological reference, he was graduated into the senior age group.

• 621
561 the household principles of authority in which seniority gives one the right to command. This principle is violated in the case of an older man who has served as regidor and sometimes even judge and returns to the lawer post of ceremonial leader of the policemen. Some of the officials say that this is an "ugly" custom because it means that the hierarchy "is not a straight road." Due to obstacles in the individual's career in the hierarchy, within any segment there may be older men in the lower posts than in the higher. However, except for the barrio judges, posts within each segment are occupied by men of roughly the same decade in age (Table 23).

[693] A complement of age-grading in the designation of officials is the principle of residence. In the upper two ranks of judges, one is chosen from the upper division, Ahk'olnantik, and one from the lower division, Alannantik. The remaining two judges are chosen from the outlying barrios of Madronal and Bočib'al. Judges representing the colonias of San Vicente, San Caralampio, and Cruz Quemada do not regularly attend the town

TABLE 23. Rank and Age of Civil Officials

Post	*Division*	*Age*
Judges (Alkaletik)		
First Judge	Alannantik	75
Second Judge	Ahk'olnantik	52
Barrio Judge	Madronal	42
Barrio Judge	Bočibal	50
Regidores (Rehiroletik)		
First Regidor	Ahk'olnantik	43
Second Regidor	Alannantik	44
Third Regidor	Alannantik	43
Fourth Regidor	Ahk'olnantik	48
Police (Mayoletik)		
First Police	Ahk'olnantik	27
First Police	Alannantik	28
Second Police	Ahk'olnantik	25
Second Police	Alannantik	30
Third Police	Ahk'olnantik	32
Third Police	Alannantik	30
Fourth Police	Madronal	25
Fourth Police	Bočibal	35
Martomorey	Ahk'olnantik	48
Martomorey	Alannantik	48

hall, but always appear at major ceremonies and at the inauguration of the 621 •
new officials. Residents of the barrios and colonias can never rise to any 561
position above that of assistant judge, but once they have served in this [693]
post they may become principales in their own localities. One week the
first regidor from Ahk'olnantik serves with the third regidor from Alannantik,
and the next week the second regidor from Ahk'olnantik serves
with the fourth regidor from Alannantik. The ten police are ranked in [625]
five levels with representatives from each side at every level in the series
except for the fourth level, which is occupied by police from the barrios.

These civil officials, called as a group the *huʔeletik*, those who are "able" 621
(in control), constitute the traditional ladder of the hierarchy. To reach a [192]
high post, an official must first pass through each of the lower positions in
the hierarchy. Outside of this ranked hierarchy, the posts of president and [212
síndico are occupied by young men who are able to read, write, and speak 191
fluently in Spanish. Literacy was, until the present generation, limited to a 177
few men in their thirties. With increasing literacy, the competition for 178]
these posts is growing.[2] Men who have such skills are called upon as signers
of official documents and are called *firmanetik*.

Also existing outside of the traditional hierarchy is the post of secretary [464
which had, until 1965, been occupied by a Ladino. This was the only post 563
which was paid; it also provided opportunity for earning extra income by 178]
preparing "acts," or official documents, and fines from court cases. The
present incumbent is an Indian of Alannantik.

Because Tzoʔontahal's hierarchy is still a linked series of civil and reli- 794
gious posts, the structure of the civil hierarchy cannot be considered independently from that of the religious hierarchy. The major segments of the religious hierarchy are the *martomaetik*, mayordomos or caretakers, and *alperesetik*, alfereces or captains of the fiestas. The internal ranking of the sixteen mayordomos depends on the number of religious posts the incumbent has filled and on the rank order of the saints he serves.

The alfereces, or captains of the fiestas, provide a ceremonial link be-

---

[2] Julio de la Fuente (1964:30) has summarized the effect of literacy in breaking the [555
homogeneity of the community since the literate Indians have received greater privileges and
release from communal work. When the entire community is educated, the monopoly of 212]
literacy is broken.

794 tween civil and religious authorities. They are in charge of the fiestas for
the saints whom they represent: San Francisco, San Pedro the Martyr,
Santa Lucía, and Sacramento. The internal ranking of this set of officials
is based on time of entry. This varies in the annual cycle since the new alférez
enters just before the fiesta for which he will be responsible. He will
be expected to give deference to the three who have preceded him during
[192] the year. The terms applied to this fluctuating ranking system in order of
highest to lowest are *hilon ta pasaro* (remains as past), *pasaro* (past
official), *sčebal ʔač' ʔalperes* (second new alférez), and *ʔač' ʔalperes*
(new alférez).

794 Outside of the traditional religious hierarchy are roles performed by
562 functionaries on the basis of specific skills. These include the fiscal, assistant
to the priest, and the *meʔeletik̨*, women who serve as prayer-reciters.
The fiscal takes orders from the priest when the latter is in town, and in
the absence of the priest he directs the activities of the mayordomos within
the church. He is chosen on the basis of his knowledge of Spanish and
willingness to perform the priests' bidding. He remains in office as long as
he wishes, or until he is forcibly retired by the priest or by the mayordomos.
When retired, he has an ex officio role saying prayers at funerals, and
is often called upon for house ceremonies and as godfather in baptisms.
The retired fiscales attend mass more often than the rest of the townspeople
and sit in the front near the altar. The prayer-reciters are usually widowed
or single women of the town whom the lay sisters have organized as
621 support in responding to the catechism.

794 The officials who have served in five posts in the civil hierarchy and six
posts in the religious hierarchy become *pasaroetik̨*, the Tzeltal rendering
[192] of *pasados* or former officials. Any one of these men may be eligible to
serve as one of two principales, one chosen from Alannantik and one from
Ahk'olnantik. They remain in office until they are too old to serve or until
death. Each of the outlying barrios has two principales chosen from
among men who have served in office.

Entry Into and Exit from Office

621 The constitution assures local autonomy in the election of civil officials.
666 The officials of Tzoʔontahal, including the two principales, president,

síndico, four regidores, ten policemen, four judges, and the "signers" meet in the town hall on the twentieth of November. Except for the post of president, which is now a contested position, each incumbent names his own successor. The president opens the meeting with an address to the principales, saying, "Now, *Mamal* Principales, whom will we name to leave in power in the town hall to pass the year?" The principales reply with the question to each officer: "Whom have you thought of naming?" 621 666

Each officer gives a name, which is written down by the secretary. When the officials have heard who will be the new officials, the first judge speaks with the principales and the "signers" using the formal speech of the patˀoˀtan to ask permission to serve the "gift" of trago. Eight days later an assembly of all the male household heads takes place. The president announces the names of the nominated officials in Tzeltal and the secretary announces them in Spanish. The president asks for a show of hands of all those who support the nominations. If the man who is named does not want to take the office, he may request withdrawal of his name. The president accepts refusal by all nominees for civil posts if there is adequate excuse.

The great majority of men begin their careers between the ages of twenty-two and thirty. Only seventeen men, or 5 percent of the 311 household heads censused (Table 24), had reached the age of thirty without serving in any office. Among men fifty and over, only two men had not filled any religious post (Table 25), and all had served in some civil post. 621 561

There are two major channels of mobility in the civil hierarchy. The more common course is for a young married man to enter as a policeman, either at the third or fourth level. Next, he will again be named as policeman, or possibly third or fourth regidor, if he is a poor man and has little hope of rising to the higher posts. If the man or his father is well off, he will be asked to serve as alférez. The appointment may be made with or without prior service in the civil or religious hierarchy, and the main prerequisite is having sufficient money to pay for the expenses. Once he fills this post, he will be eligible for first or second regidor since he will have learned the major speeches required in ritual gatherings. Formerly he took on at this point the post of assistant judge. These positions are now assigned to incumbents from the outlying barrios, and the number of posts a man in the center must fill in order to become a pasado has been reduced 621 794

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 171]

TABLE 24. Civil and Religious Careers of Household Heads

(*Civil*)

Age of household head	*No office*	*Police (1 term)*	*Police (2 terms)*	*Síndico*	*Síndico, police*	*Police, regidor*	*Police, regidor, judge*	*Police, regidor, judge (2 terms)*	*Police, síndico, president*	*Síndico, president*	*President*	*Unknown*
19	2											
20	20	3										
21	6											
22	11	1										
23	1	2										
24	7											
25	19	2										
26	6	1										
27	1	2										
28	11	5										
29	1	2										
30	6	6		2								
31	2											
32	5	1		2								
33		2										
34		2		1								
35	6	9	2		1	1						
36	1	5			1	3						

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

[P.167]

621 ●
794

37	1	1										
38	1	9	2	2		1						
39	2	2	1									
40		4				3	1	1				
41	1	3						1				
42	1	2				2			1	2	1	
43	1	2	1	1		1						
44	2			1	3							
45	2	4			1	10	1		1		1	1
46						3						
48	3	1			1						1	
50						4	1					
52						1						
54								2				
55						7			1			
56						1						
58		1						1				
60		1			1	1	3	5			1	
62						1						
65						3		3	1	1		
70								1			1	
75						1						
78										1		
79							1					
80								2			1	
85								1				
88								1				

71 Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

129
794

[P.168]

TABLE 24. Civil and Religious Careers of Household Heads

(*Religious*)

Age of household head	*No office*	*Niʔnal (1 term)*	*Niʔnal (2 terms)*	*Aliʔbal, niʔnal*	*Niʔnal, tatil*	*Niʔnal, aliʔbal, tatil*	*Niʔnal, aliʔbal, tatil (2 terms)*	*Niʔnal, aliʔbal, tatil (2 terms), kobraria*	*Niʔnal, aliʔbal, tatil (2 terms), kobraria (2 terms)*	*Fiscal*	*Unknown*
19	2										
20	18	5									
21	6										
22	11	1									
23	1	11	1								
24	5	2									
25	11	10									
26	3	3		1							
27	1	2									
28	16	9	1								
29	2	1									
30	2	9	1	1	1						
31	2										
32	2	5		1							
33				1	1						
34		3									
35	3	11	2	1	1	1					
36	1	4		3	1	1					

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

[P.169]

621
794

37	2										
38	1	8	2	1	1	2					
39	1	2		2							
40		2		1		2	2		2		
41			1		1	3					
42		1	2	1	2	3					
43		1		1	1	3					
44	1			5							
45	2	3	1	5	2	2	3		1	2	1
46					2	1					
48	1	1		3			1				
50						4	1				
52						1					
54						1			1		
55					5	1	1		1		
56					1						
58				1		1					
60	1			1		5		2	3		
62					1						
65				1		2	1	1	2		
70		1						1			
75										1	
78											1
79								1			
80		1							2		
85									1		
88									1		

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

621
794
556
423
231
561

TABLE 25. Number of Civil and Religious Offices of Household Heads over 50 Years of Age as Related to Wealth

Age of household head	*Wealth*		*No. of civil offices*	*No. of religious offices*
	Land in hectares	*Head of cattle*		
54	3	4	5	3
55	3	8	2	3
65	3	11	6	2
50	2½	2	4	4
75	2½	4	6	6
55	2	8	2	4
55	2		4	3
60	2	2	2	4
65	2		6	6
75	2	7	4	3
78	2	6	2	1
50	2½	2	3	4
50	1½	2	6	5
55	1½	6	2	6
58	1½		1	2
60	1½		6	6
60	1½	4	4	4
60	1½	8	4	5
80	1½		4	5
88	1½	7	6	6
50	1	10	2	3
50	1	1	3	3
54	1	4	6	6
54	1	4	6	6
55	1	6	2	3
56	1	4	3	3
58	1		5	4
60	1	1	5	6
60	1	2	5	6
60	1	2	4	6
65	1	2	3	
65	1		6	6
65	1		3	3
70	1		1	1
75	1		5	5
79	1		5	5
80	1	2	3	
80	1	22	3	1
85	1	6	6	6

Age of household head	*Wealth*		*No. of civil offices*	*No. of religious offices*
	Land in hectares	*Head of cattle*		
55	½		2	2
55	½		2	2
55	½	2	2	3
60	½		2	3
60	½		1	3
60	½		4	3
62	½	1	2	3
65	½		2	3
65	½	4	4	6
65	½		6	5
75	½		5	6
87	½		4	4

621
794
556
423
231
561

from six to five. The reason given for this is that there are more people 621
now than formerly. 794

The second course of civil careers is to serve as síndico and go on to president, bypassing the intermediate and lower posts of the hierarchy and never filling the higher traditional posts. Of seven who have served as president, two served as síndico, two had no previous office, and three had been both policeman and síndico (Table 25). None of the former presidents served in any civil post after being president. Two served as fiscal in their religious careers and had had no other religious service. This is the [212]
course pursued by literate men who speak Spanish well. An alternative [191]
course is to enter the ejido commission as secretary, treasurer, or president [423]
and then serve as síndico, or even directly as president. The president elected in 1964 had served only on the ejido commission. This caused some discontent, but not enough to prevent his election.

The household head enters religious office first as *nič'nal* or junior may- 794
ordomo, then serves as *ʔaliʔbal,* or assistant, next as *tatil,* or elder mayor- [192]
domo of a lesser saint. The fourth position is tatil of San Pedro, after which comes *ḳobraria,* or cofrade, first of San Francisco, then of Santa Lucía or Sacramento. Following his appointment as tatil of San Pedro, the incumbent holds the first gathering of mayordomos in his house. When he completes his term in this office, he may be called upon by neighbors, relatives, and compadres to serve as nakawane in household ceremonials. He

794 may at any time in his career be called upon as alférez. This may occur
[625] even before he has served as a junior mayordomo or policeman since the
[556] post depends on his own or his father's wealth.

• 624 The normal career of an official in the traditional hierarchy involves a
balance of civil and religious posts. A man enters these posts according to
794 convenience, not in a rigid alternation between civil and religious wings.
561 The rough balancing of posts can be seen in the careers of men over fifty in Table 25. According to informants, a man should start and end his career in the religious wing. By the age of thirty, forty-three men had filled at least one post in the religious hierarchy, and only twenty-four men had served in the civil hierarchy (Table 24). The religious posts are considered less onerous than the civil posts since the incumbents are in attendance only one day a week instead of every day, and their terms in office last only six months.

621 Wealth level, except in cases of extreme poverty, does not limit a man's
794 participation in the traditional hierarchy. Of fourteen men over seventy,
556 eight had completed their civil posts and seven their religious posts. Three who had not followed the traditional career lines had served as president. The town is small enough so that career lines have not followed any polarization of the upper levels of the hierarchy as occurs in towns of larger size (Bunzel 1952, Camara 1952, Cancian 1965). Discrimination is based on residence rather than wealth—those Indians who reside in barrios and colonias cannot reach any post higher than that of assistant judge. Wealth level is a factor, however, in the time span of the individual's career, since at some time before becoming second or first regidor he must have filled the expensive post of alférez. Table 25 lists the careers of men fifty years of age and over in order of wealth. It is possible to finish a career in office by the age of fifty, but if a man has less than one hectare of land, it is unlikely that he will finish before he is sixty-five. The Indians of Tzoʔontahal do not however maximize the importance of passing through the hi-
[554] erarchy. It is a duty not a goal, and the reward in prestige is minimal.

794 The only post in which wealth has been crucial was that of alférez. The
556 incumbent and the household of which he was a member spent 3,000 pesos
796 to carry out the fiestas with which he was charged in his year in office.
666 The president, the four judges, and the four regidores chose the alférez

shortly before the fiesta of the saint's day with which he was charged. 794
When the nomination was made, the president sent out the first policeman 796
with the chief policeman to bring the man chosen to the town hall. 556
They expected, and were always confronted with, resistance to the nomination. [666]
In order to gain acceptance they got the nominee drunk in a [273]
drinking session at the town hall. Liquor was measured out, and all the
officials drank only a half cup at each round, but the new alférez was required
to drink a full cup. The rounds continued until the new alférez [697]
was drunk. If he did not accept at this session, he was put in jail to think [689]
it over. Another drinking session took place the following day.

Nomination to the post of alférez was the only situation in which the 794
jail penalty has been brought into effect, since refusal by nominees to other 556
posts simply means that the officials "look for someone else." The reason 621 •
given for invoking the punishment was "we know he has the wealth and
therefore he should serve." Until 1965 the town had always succeeded in
recruiting two of the alfereces from Ahk'olnantik and two from Alannantik.
Since the upper division of Ahk'olnantik has grown at a more rapid
rate than the lower division, candidates were found only in Ahk'olnantik.
This unbalancing of the population ratios undermined the institution of
alférez, which had always been the most unpopular position. When I returned [114]
to the field in 1967, it had been eliminated.

THE FUNCTIONS OF CIVIL OFFICIALS

An analysis of the formally prescribed functions of the civil officials 128
must take into account three sources of data: the functions as prescribed 621
by state legislation, the functions as understood by local officials, and the observed activities of the officials. Table 26 compares the functions of officials as stated in the constitution of the state of Chiapas (Secretaría del Gobierno Departmental de Chiapas, 1828: Decreto 52, Nov. 30, 1825)[3] to statements of informants and to my observations of the carrying out of their official obligations.

---

[3] I have chosen this constitution as the first post-independence statement of the status of local civil administrators.

642
621
626
554
The statement of functions of the civil officials as codified in the state constitution contrasts with that of local informants first of all in the brevity of the latter. This indicates the lack of functional specificity in the role as conceived by Indians in contrast to its Spanish-derived model. The latitude of acceptable performance in the role is best indicated by the statements concerning why a man is relieved of office. A man might be dismissed because he "fights a lot," because he "gets drunk and fights," or because he "steals a lot." The qualification "a lot" suggests the difficulty of actually ridding the town of an incumbent who has caused difficulties while in office. There are only two posts in which deposition actually has occurred: those of president and fiscal. Both these posts represent mediating roles between local and national interest groups. The deposition of the president Augustín recounted in Chapter 9 indicates the kind of community action which can be mobilized. Significantly, failure to perform prescribed duties is not mentioned.

621
554
Second, it is the presence of the officials, not their specific obligations, which is of significance in the local context. "Sitting" therefore is a central and active duty. Each morning at about seven o'clock the officials gather to sit on the benches on the porch of the town hall. The president and síndico sit inside at the table. They return at six in the evening to sit again. The line-up of the civil authorities at their appointed places each morning and evening is a statement of social control. Their presence gives evidence of an authority ready to act against offenders.

A third feature of contrast is that the local statement of functions includes many of the ceremonial activities of the civil officials. Thus the president has the significant duties of seeing that the banners pass into the town hall at the time of a fiesta, and of going to the house of the alférez when the banners are moved in procession. The holiness of office is associated with the holy symbol of the banners. For the police, collecting the 20-peso portions of meat when a bull is butchered for ceremonial meals is as significant as apprehending criminals.

RITUAL BEHAVIOR

In ritual behavior, the status of officials is projected in role performance. Relative position in each ceremonial setting is an index to rank.

Priorities in service and salutations validate the prestige of the incumbent. 621 554 Rituals also provide the occasion for noting social change. Divergencies between expected and enacted sequences are a clue to shifts in authority and prestige. Conflict between competing interests often comes to the surface when structural features are made explicit in ritual performances. This is [273] particularly true in these Indian villages where drinking liquor releases inhibitions. The inaugurations of officials in the civil and religious hierarchies are analyzed below to show how they reflect both continuity and change.

Inauguration of civil officials. Legal provision for the installation 642 of the civil officials is minimally stated in the constitution of the state of 621 Chiapas (Secretaría del Gobierno Departamental de Chiapas, 1841:4):

1. The judges and regidores elected will present on the 30th of December their credentials to the Secretary of the civil branch in order that he will put an account of them in a book.
2. Having verified this, he will give an account to them on the following day in the town hall, for which he will name a commission of three people who will identify the people named.
3. On the 1st of January of each year the first judge will meet in the meeting room and present the oath before the civil officials, chaired by the Prefect or Subprefect along with the remaining members of the group, as is stated in article 164 of the law of the 20th of March, 1837. The form of the oath will be the following:

   > "I swear to God to preserve and to have others preserve the constitutional laws decreed and sanctioned by the National Congress in the year of 1836". To which the response will be, "Yes, I swear."

   Concluding the oath, they will take their seats. The outgoing officials will cease their functions, and they will be withdrawn from the place of the meetings.

The elaboration of ritual beyond the requirements of the law in household settings as well as in the town hall reveals the significance of ceremonial acts in these small, endogamous communities. The inauguration is a 621

621 crucial ceremony for the following reasons: (1) Most of the officials are changed simultaneously, so that, since there is neither carryover in a civil service nor tenure officials, the act of transferring authority carries a greater burden in preserving continuity; (2) The official is integrated in a prior set of kinship and other social relations such that he cannot act anonymously in his official capacity as judge or policeman. Thus one of the functions of the inauguration is a disengagement from the preexisting network of obligations and a priority commitment to the obligations of the office (Parsons, 1951:80–84; Gluckman 1962:34; Cancian 1963); (3) The household ceremony preceding the inauguration provides a setting in which the individual who is about to assume the office learns what is expected of him (Fortes 1959:82).

The inauguration is patterned on a series of acts which symbolically communicate to performers and villagers who participate as observers the desired social goals. The settings in which the change of civil officials is carried out are (1) the house of the incoming official, (2) the town hall, (3) the plaza, and (4) the church. In each arena, the validation and support of the new officials is publicly defined before overlapping sets of participants and observers.

The activities of the inauguration observed in 1965 are recorded below:

621
527
574 *On New Year's eve, household celebrations are held in the house of each new official. The houses are decorated with pine needles on the floor and juniper boughs on the porch. The visitors arrive about eight in the evening bearing pitch pine and wood to light the house and provide fuel for cooking. The helpers and guests who attend the evening celebration in the house of the president include relatives, compadres, and neighbors who will support him in his term of office. Primary support is given by the official's wife, without whom he would not be serving in the hierarchy. His advisors and councilors in the household are the nakawanehetik, or household officials. These are men who have passed through at least four religious offices and who are somehow related to the new official. A second group of supporters in the household setting are the* b'alnialetik, *young men who are either brothers, brothers-n-law, sons, compadres, godchildren, or neighbors of the houseowner, and who serve*

as errand boys and assistants. A third group are the Školtawanehetik, *the female helpers, usually wives of the b'alnialetik or widows who are part of the official's or his wife's family. A fourth group are visitors,* yulatak, *who come to congratulate the new official. [The visitors at the house of the first judge are shown in Figure 7.]* 621 527 [574]

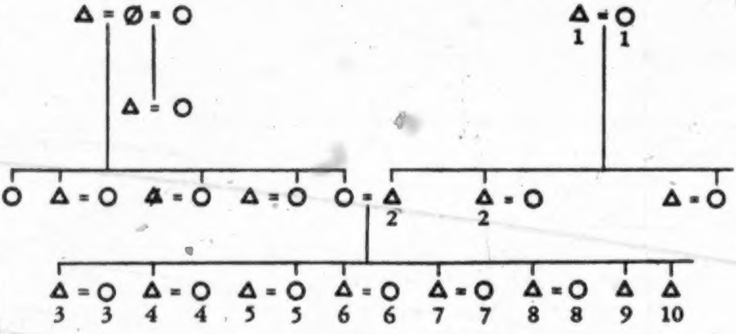
The new official addresses the first nakawane with the following speech: 621 537 527

Official: "Holy evening, Mamtat, to your health."

Nakawane: "Holy evening, Mamtat, to your health."

Official: "Lord, how are you, Mamtat? You are alive, word of God, this holy evening. There is no illness behind your heart."

Fig. 7. Relatives at House of First Judge on Eve of Inauguration [601]



Nakawane: "I live. I feel no illness."

Official: "Lord Mamtat, give pardon with God, with the Virgin Mother. Give holy pardon your mothers, your fathers, with God.

"Give pardon, Lord, give pardon. Virgin mother. Here we are gathered before you where we are seated, our soil, our mud.

"How are we going to succeed in what we will have to do in this holy new year for our patron Lord? Here again in the dawning of the holy hour, let us look into our heart, there where we are going to receive the holy oath inside the holy cold house, the cold hall, where we go receive the work and suffering of the holy staff, the holy wand this holy day, this

621
527 holy year. And so we shall be able to do what our mothers and what our
[537] fathers did here where the holy Father sees us and the holy Mother sees us."

[782] The formal prayer, using elements of all the addresses of patʔoʔtan, presages the events which will take place and announces the continuity with the past in following out the work the ancestors have done. The civil authorities, like the religious authorities, assert that they are taking on a holy responsibility. There is, in the words of the patʔoʔtan, no distinction between profane and sacred obligations toward the village.

[273] Following the drinking and prayers, liquor is served. Drinking order always follows the elder to younger pattern which, in household settings, is always coincident with prestige ranking. At midnight, coffee, bread, and bean-filled tamales are served.

621 The second series of household gatherings takes place on the morning of
527 New Year's Day in the houses of the new president, the first judge, and
574 the first policeman. It is the duty of the fourth regidor to assemble the other three regidores, and of the assistant judge to assemble the other judges. The two groups, regidores and judges, meet in the first judge's house and are served coffee and liquor. They then proceed to the house of the president. As the judges and regidores arrive there, the visiting group greets all of the assembled guests at the president's house with a prescribed greeting, the sak'inaltat and the hand-kissing, called ʔutzk'aab. The first judge exchanges an extended patʔoʔtan with the first nakawane of the president and then liquor is served to all those gathered. The assembled group next stands and "turns toward the rising sun." This is said to be a "defense against the entry of the devil."

While the higher officials meet in the house of the president, the policemen join togther in the houses of the first policeman on each side of the dual division. Just as in the house of the president, the ceremony consists in serving liquor and coffee. They await the sound of the firecrackers set off in the yard of the president's house before setting out for the town hall. With this announcement of the departure, the officials at the president's house and at the two first policemen's houses set out for the town hall.

621 Gathered in the town hall are the old officials along with the alfereces
527 and the principals. The new officials enter two by two, the president and

621 527 [788] *sindico first, followed by the two first judges, the assistant judges of the barrios, the regidores, the judges of the colonias, the two first police, followed by the rest of the police in pairs. As they enter, they kneel and make the sign of the cross, or "measure their noses"* (sp'is sniʔik), *an act which shows respect to the holy banners that the alfereces have delivered from the church and laid on the table in the town hall. On this same table are strewn orange blossoms and leaves of laurel with the newly peeled canes of the police and the old staffs of office of the higher officials. The new officials put on their rosaries as they prepare to receive their staffs.*

The principales, fairly inebriated from drinking all morning as they awaited the arrival of the new officials, pass out the staffs assisted by the old president, who helps direct them as they wander in a daze from the table to the line of waiting officials. The second principal picks the staff from the table and hands it to the first principal who passes it on to the recipient. The act of passing over the staffs is a significant index to their role in the hierarchy. They are the only "permanent" officials—permanent so long as they are in good health and not impoverished. They are the link between the outgoing and incoming officials.

The oath of office was given in Spanish by the Ladino schoolteacher the year I observed the ceremony. Formerly, this was performed by the Ladino secretary, but a contest of power in the community resulted in this shift in role performers [Chapter 9]. The inventory of the town's possessions is read by the "old" president[4] *and each item is inspected as it is passed on to the "new" president.*

After the ceremony in the town hall, all the old officials scatter to their homes and the new officials, wearing their rosaries, go to the church. The principales wait in the town hall for their return.

621 527 788 [794] [554] *The new officials follow the alfereces out of the town hall in a procession. The four alfereces, holding their banners, line up before the town hall and dip their banners toward the town hall and then toward the church. They lead the procession of new officials two times around the plaza, stopping in front of the church to dip the banners toward it and the town hall. The order of the procession indicates the rank order of the offi-*

---

[4] The officials who have completed their year in office are referred to as "old," and the incoming officials are referred to as "new" at this event.

● 621
527 *cials, from the last policeman to the first and second judges. The procession makes two turns "to show [the townspeople assembled in the plaza] who the new officials to remain in office are."*
[788]

[554] *Awaiting the arrival of the new officials in the church are all of the* [794] *mayordomos. Their function is "to watch the officials as they enter to see who they are." The new officials enter two by two and proceed to the* [782] *altar rail where they "speak to God," asking for health so that they can fulfill their obligation to the town. They kiss each of the saints' pedestals and then leave the "holy mother church" to return to the "holy father cabildo."*

621
527
273 *The first order of the new president is to ask the fourth regidor to buy two liters of the "gift of the ancestors," contraband liquor. When the liquor arrives, the first judge rises and goes to the principales. Standing before them while they remain seated, he asks permission of God to "receive the gift," or drink the liquor, saying, "Give pardon, Mamal Krinsipal; let a little enter and warm your body."*

The policemen, after leaving the church, enter the kitchen shack attached to the town hall. The first new policeman orders the fourth policeman to bring a little trago, and when he returns with the liquor, the first policeman orders one of the policemen of the colonias to measure the drinks. They drink one liter, after which the first policeman of the lower division addresses the first policeman of the upper division in the patʔoʔtan. After the spatbeyoʔtan, *or formal address, the first policeman wonders "whether they can endure a little more. Can they drink more liquor without getting drunk?" It is his responsibility to receive any orders from the president, and he wonders, "What should happen if we get drunk? We won't know if there is an errand for the mamal judge and we cannot help. Better rest a while, and if there is an errand we can help a little. If there is no errand, let us drink a little more until midday." At twelve noon both groups retire to their homes to rest their hearts.*

794
527 *Inauguration of religious officials.* The change of the mayordomos occurs twice annually, once on January 6 and a second time on the Day of San Pedro and San Pablo, June 29. San Pedro is associated with

794 527 *ranged with a large table in the center, the candles allotted to each mayordomo laid out in bundles of nine. On the table is a little cross of the crucified Christ. The priest blesses the new mayordomos and the old mayordomos.* [788] *Then the fiscal gives nine candles wrapped in a napkin to each mayordomo. The nič'nal, junior mayordomo, of each saint first takes the candles allotted to the tatil to the latter's house, and then takes his own to his house. After the oath, the new mayordomos return to the house of the Cofrade of Sacramento where they drink until prayer time in the evening.* [273]

On the sk'ak'alel Sk'in, *the true day of the fiesta, the new mayordomos go to hear the mass along with women prayer-reciters at seven in the morning. They then go to the house of the Cofrade of Sacramento, leaving three junior mayordomos to play the drums and flute at the door of the church.* [533] *In the house of the cofrade, they count the money of the Virgin and of San Pedro the Martyr. This fund of money is passed over from the outgoing officials to the incoming officials along with interest. It is now being loaned out to local entrepreneurs.* [454] *The Virgin has a fund of 228 pesos, and San Pedro the Martyr has 40 pesos. The fiscal supervises the counting of the money, and records the sum, after which the patʔoʔtan is recited and drinks are served.*

● 621 554 In the behavioral sequences of the inauguration, several features of the structure and functioning of the hierarchy can be noted. First, one can see in the actions of the officials that the hierarchy of civil officials is not a smooth step ladder but a segmented order. The categories of officials, the alkaletik, rehiroletik, and mayoletik, act in concert, move in unison, and sit in the same area in all the settings. Each of the three categories has its internal hierarchy, ranging from first to fourth (and in the case of the mayoletik, from first to fifth, physically denoted by the order in which they sit and drink. Those who speak the greetings are the men in the first position of each category. They command their group or the group immediately below them. Thus, the judge orders the fourth regidor to get liquor, and the first policeman orders the police from the rural colonia to get liquor. By these behavioral indices one can see the ordering and grouping by age, skill in praying, and territorial identification within the segments of the civil-religious hierarchy. These principles apply, however, only to ordering between segments; because of the uneven civil careers of the incumbents, a man in the lower ranks within a segment may be older than another in the same rank because he started his career later. 621 554

A second significant feature of the inauguration behavior is the sacred quality of the acts, indicated by the words of the patʔoʔtan—"holy office," "holy cold house," "holy staff, holy wand," "holy day and holy hour." The presence of the alfereces, the observation of the new civil officials by the religious officials, the movement from the town hall to the church and back to the town hall are the behavioral links between "our holy mother church and our holy father cabildo." 621 794 527

The behavioral elements in the inauguration of the religious officials parallel those in the inauguration of the civil officials. As in the case of the latter, the ritual takes place in both domestic and public settings—the house of the new officials and the church. In both inaugurations, the same feature of "raising" (rounding up for gatherings) the officials occurs: those of lower rank gather in the houses of successively higher officials, finally entering the house of the highest official. In each setting, the same ritual acts are performed—the formal greeting, the serving of coffee and bread followed by bean tamales, the request for permission to drink, and the serving of the "gift" of liquor. In the household setting for both civil and religious officials the same role performers—nakawanehetik, b'alnialetik and školtawanetik—lend their support.

In the religious hierarchy the symbolic "tools" of office of the mayordomos are candles while those in the civil hierarchy are canes. In the case of the inauguration of the religious officials, the inventory involves counting the money collected for each saint rather than accounting for the possessions owned by the town. An inventory of the saints' clothing is not made as in other towns, possibly because the lay sisters living in the town maintain this stock of equipment.

The formalized speech of the patʔoʔtan is an important social tool in both public and private ceremonials. Characteristic of the speech are the [192] elaboration of simile and metaphor (*meʔbaʔal, wok̨ol:* poverty and trouble in reference to one's house; *lumiltik̨ k̨ač'aletik̨:* clay and mud in reference to bodies; *snuk̨ shoy:* his joined one, his companion in reference to one's wife; *sapil yok̨' sapil sk̨'aab k̨'a santuetik̨ k̨'a peroltik̨:* the washings

621 794 527 [192] of the legs and arms of our patron lord, Jesus, in reference to liquor). The prayer-like intonation, together with repeated invocation of the gods, gives a sacred quality to the words.

[273] Liquor, referred to as "the gift of God" or "gift of the ancestors," is of crucial significance in both civil and religious ritual. Receiving an offering of liquor is tantamount to accepting part of the spiritual essence of the donor. Drinking in each of the domains—the house, the town hall, and the church—serves to tie together different sets of participants in the obligation system of service to the community. In Mauss' terms (1954:11) receiving the gift defines "a pattern of spiritual bonds between things which are to some extent parts of persons, and persons and groups, that behave in some measure as if they were things."

[273] In both inaugurations an attempt is made to control the intake of liquor so that the officials can function in the ritual. This is shown in the civil inauguration when the first policeman thinks about whether the police can take another drink and still carry out their duties. It is more explicit in the religious inaugurations when the cofrades warn the mayordomos that they should not drink so much that they "walk like madmen." The mayordomos then pass on the drinks served to them to the nakawanehetik who drink them and fall into a stupor.

621 794 527 793 875 In noting the difference between elicited and performed ritual, minimal changes in behavior provided clues to structural change. The change of custom as to where the meal of the mayordomos takes place (it now is given at the house of the cofrade rather than in the courtyard of the church) indicates a significant shift in the relation between the priest and the local religious leadership. The priest has gained control over the church since he has taken up residence in the parish house. The incident in which the confrontation took place is described in Chapter 9. Divergence of the performed from the expected ritual in the inauguration of the civil authority occurred when the schoolteacher delivered the oath instead of the former Ladino secretary. This revealed the schoolteacher's increasing power in his competition with the former cacique.

621 794 527 The rituals of both civil and religious inaugurations reveal the sense of the sacred obligation to the ancestors. Although both the roles and the scheduling of events are derived from outside the culture, the necessity for

undertaking the burden of office is still phrased as a means of maintaining 621
the internal system of security. Tying the new official to personal supporters 794
in the household setting is a significant means of integrating the Spanish 527
governmental system with the preexisting authority systems.

The emphasis on continuity is evident in the prescribed pattern of behavior 621
stressing repetition of bodily and verbal performances. Repetition 794
of behavior, the essence of all ritual, provides that fulfillment of expectations 527
which links the present with the past.[5] The nakawanchetik, who are 177
the repositories of knowledge of the customs of the ancestors, are stage directors 178
of acts performed in the house. Behavioral replication is reinforced by verbal references in the pat?o?tan to performing "that which our mothers, that which our fathers did." When any act has lost the wider context of belief in which it must at one time have been embedded, the reason given for the performance is simply "so was the custom of our ancestors." As an example of this, the officials in the president's house on the day of the inauguration stand and bow in the direction of the rising sun. A few informants have heard of the God of the East, Santo Ariyó, the saint in charge of household gods who gave to the people corn, wheat, beans, and cattle, and they say that it is in recognition of him that people turn to the East and bow their heads in all household performances. They further state that in this act they defend the house against the entry of the devil. But the mythological context which might explain the logic of this association is lost. These behavioral sherds, when cut off from the belief system which they dramatized, survive in perpetuating the customs of the ancestors.

The link with the past is also seen in the presence of both new and old 621
officials in the town hall, providing a setting in which the succession of the 794
new officials is acknowledged by the old. The role of the principales is of 527
the greatest importance in establishing continuity, significantly emphasized 178
in the fact that it is they who hand over the symbol of authority, the

---

[5] Bunzel (1952:231) has pointed to this familiarity of ritual sets in a variety of ceremonials as providing ties with the past in the inauguration in Chichicastenango, and Vogt (1966) has shown the significance of replication in the ceremonials of Zinacantan. Another function served by behavorial replication is that which Leach (1967:2) pointed out for verbal replication in myths and prayers: it overcomes the "static" of less significant background interference. [171]

621
794 newly cut pine canes of the police and the old carved and painted staffs of
527 the higher officials.

178 Order and measure, respect and deference are the social effect achieved
621 in the ritual performance of the inaugurations. In the act of drinking,
794 these principles become behaviorally explicit. The drink is carefully mea-
527 sured out and passed to the first principal, who asks permission to drink it
273 of each set of officials in order of their ranked positions in the hierarchy.
Each official must receive the drink, whether he is a teetotaler or not. He will then perform the action of drinking, which is sufficient to express his good will as part of the group. The symbolic act of pretending to drink—receiving the "gift" and raising it to one's lips without imbibing—reveals the importance of acts *as such* in social interaction. This is expressed in the
[192] Tzeltal loan term *ʔaḳsion,* from the Spanish *acción,* the pretended act,
which demonstrates in this case one's good will in joining in the communal act. We have a tendency in our culture to downgrade the act, stressing motive specific to the immediate goal of the act. If performance is motivated by other goals, we express it in phrases such as "He is only acting," or "It was all a big act." In Tzoʔontahal, the play is the thing, and everything can be justified by reference to traditional expectations.

621 Before describing some of the organizational changes which are affect-
794 ing the civil-religious hierarchy, I shall at this point assess its viability on
561 the basis of structural criteria. These criteria include the effectiveness of
177 the system in (1) coordinating roles such that conflict is minimized in car-
178 rying out tasks, (2) motivating people to enter into office and fulfill obli-
gations, (3) absorbing changes without structural modification.

The primary devices for coordinating roles in the hierarchy are those of relative age and residence in the dual division. The major challenge to the age-respect pattern has been the introduction of young leadership in the roles of president and síndico. This shock to the system has been somewhat overcome by the retention of the ceremonial primacy of the principales. The president and síndico are considered outside the traditional hierarchy. This conceptual isolation of the roles becomes obvious when one asks informants to list the civil officials, for they never include the president and síndico in the first response. They are mentioned in response to repeated enquiries as to whether there are other officials.

The principle of balancing posts according to residence in the dual division 621 794
is maintained in the traditional civil posts but fails to be effective 561
again in the case of the president. Increasing population in the upper division 177
meant that the expensive post of alférez had to be filled primarily 178
from the side with the highest population. This unbalancing of the sharing of these burdensome posts eventually led to revolt and the post was abolished. Since it was the key post in learning prayers, its loss may mean the end of the traditional rituals in the home.

The hierarchy fails to provide sufficient prestige or power to motivate 794
people voluntarily to undertake some posts. The most vulnerable post was 554
that of alférez. In fulfilling obligations to the saints, alfereces used to 434
spend over 3,000 pesos, twice the normal income of a man in one year. 796
They were assisted by members of their immediate households either in 754
loans or in the sale of pottery to help pay for the house fiestas. The show 178
of wealth at these fiestas, when up to one hundred guests were fed, excited [556]
the envy of neighbors, often among the invited guests. It was felt that this provoked witchcraft, and every former alférez I knew maintained that he suffered some catastrophe following his year in office. In the last few years before its demise in 1966 the post was accepted only under duress, and all those who had been nominated at first chose to go to jail. The reason that it survived as long as it did was the insistence of those officials who served in this post that it was essentail to maintaining good fiestas. The resolution of the contradictions by abolishing the post contrast with that of Zinacantan, where men sought the prestige-conferring posts that involved large expenditures of money as a validation of wealth (Cancian 1965).

Another contradition which minimizes the motivation to undertake the 621
traditional posts is that the highest post in the ladder, that of principal, is 554
one associated with embarrassment and shame rather than prestige. Shorn 178
of his roles in decision-making and in guarding public funds, the principal is reduced to holding the plate in which donations for the major fiestas are
placed. The ceremonial role of the principales will probably survive, however, [273]
since the old men of the community who have retired from active work in the fields enjoy the drinking sessions in the cabildo sufficiently to compensate for the shame associated with the role.

The internal structural contradictions have to be considered in the con-

621
554
178

text of strong sentiments supporting an independent civil authority. The adaptations which have been made within the existing structure are a tribute to the strength of the sentiments associating survival of tradition with office-holding in the civil-religious hierarchy. Chapter 9 will deal with the capacity of the structure to absorb change.

[P. 198-B]

133
361
621
769
491

Plate 2. The view the ancestors had of the town from the Head of Palm shows the proximity of the village center to the Pan-American Highway just to the right of center. The church, which can be discerned in the center of the major settlement, is the dividing marker for the dual division. The barrio of Yetawitz is shown just to the left of the major settlement. The barrios of Madronal and La Grandeza are found at the mid-level of the hill in the far left, on the other side of the road which goes to Pinola and "hot country." The Ladino town of Teopisca lies just beyond the hills to the right along the Pan-American Highway. From this site, the ancestors were able to see clearly all of the thoroughfares within the town and guard against the entry of evil.

794 178 more and more resistance from those named to undertake the post. Finally, in 1966 the officials were able to recruit only from the growing division of Ahk'olnantik. There had always been two representatives from each side in the past, and the role was a symbol of the division and of its [621] unity in ceremonial occasions. I predicted at that time that the institution would not survive because the imbalance in representation destroyed the structural premises of the role. When I returned for a brief visit in 1967 I was told that indeed 1966 was the last year the alfereces were inaugurated and that the institution had died. I would expect this to further weaken the structural opposition of the dual division. This case of structural breakdown is a good example of the behavioral feedback one can analyze with an equilibrium model of change. The following description of the fiesta is based on an inauguration I witnessed in 1965. 794 796

Formerly, the role of alférez involved both civil and religious functions. At the time that I observed the institution in action, it provided the ceremonial link between the civil and the religious hierarchies, but the duties of the alfereces were only ceremonial. In the words of one informant, their function was "to put on a good fiesta, to drink, and to dance, and to bear the sacred banners in processions."

The alférez was chosen by the four judges and the four regidores with the help of the president and the sindico. About two months before the installation of a new alférez, which occurred during the fiesta for the one of the four saints with which he was associated, the civil officers sent out the first policeman and the martomorey, or elder policeman, to bring in the appointed alférez. The martomorey greeted the alférez with the patʔo-ʔtan, and the appointment was made known. The standard response of the chosen alférez was, "I don't want it. I have no money. I cannot bear it [the post]." The martomorey and first policeman said, "Good, we shall return another day." On their return, if the nominee still refused to accept the post, they brought him to the jail, where they left him for two or three days before bringing him before the civil officials. There they "took his heart" to see if he would accept. A fairly standardized conversation ensued:

Nominee: "I do not want it; I cannot bear it."

> *mother? There is nothing but holy suffering, holy penitence here* 794
> *before our sinful clay, our sinful mud. Again we gather here where* 796
> *others have gathered before in the company of our ancestors, the holy* 539
> *alisiles with the liquor bearers. It is your burden the four of you,*
> *the holy work, your holy office for his godchildren again give his*
> *godchild at the gate of the door of the church our saint, our keeper,*
> *the great father Señor Santiago Calixtro for our patron God, again we*
> *gather before this doorway our bodies, our clay, our mud with the*
> *holy alisit with our costume. Only give a little liquor, the gift of* [273]
> *your mothers, your fathers, mam compadre.*

The two alfereces of Ahk'olnantik received one liter of liquor, and the 794
same quota was given to the two alfereces of Alannantik. They drank 796
some and poured off most of the measured shots into the bottles carried by [273]
the liquor bearers; then they smoked a cigarette. When they finished this,
they raised their banners and entered the plaza on horseback. The bell of
the church struck as they entered. About four o'clock, two columns of 794
horsemen formed, one behind the two alfereces of Alannantik and one be- 796
hind the two alfereces of Ahk'olnantik. One year I observed thirty-eight 526
horsemen from Ahk'olnantik and fifteen from Alannantik. The imbalance [621]
in representation for the two sides of the dual division grew sharper each
year as the population increased in Ahk'olnantik. Before starting the race,
the four alfereces crossed themselves, facing first the church, then the ca-
bildo. As the race began, the mayordomos played the drums and flute in [533]
the church yard and the nakawanehetik sat in front of the church wall.

When the racers made four passes across the plaza, they came to drink
another trago and smoke two cigarettes in front of the church. At the end [273]
of the race, they again drank and smoked the same measured quantities as [276]
the patʔoʔtan was recited by the leader of the races.

On Sk'ak'halel Sk'in, *the same procedures occurred as on the previous*
day. The final act of the fiesta took place when, after the races, the alfer-
eces dismounted and the nakawanehetik went to them and drank one liter [273]
of liquor before the leader of the races. The two most recently appointed
alfereces entered the cabildo, where the banners were laid out on the table
among orange and lemon leaves. The president, síndico, two judges, and

Chapter 9

The Competition for Power

829 Changes in the organization of the civil and religious hierarchies since the
178 constitution of 1927 can be traced in a series of events remembered by
177 members of the community. Their selection of significant events and the interpretation they make of them give the best clues to their response to change. In the remembrance of things past people structure their world and project expectations for the future. Behavior in these events lacks the controls operating in the formal rituals of the officials—age-graded authority, hierarchy, and a code of behavior which conceals the open show of power. The strategies employed in these organizational changes reveal other rules or transformation of the old rules characterizing social interaction.

554 The structure of roles in the civil and religious hierarchies has remained
621 intact. What has changed are the bases for according prestige and author-
794 ity and allocating roles. The pivotal positions in which change is occurring
578 are the mediating roles between local and national power structures, spe-
177 cifically those of president and secretary in the civil authority and of fiscal
178 and priest in the religious authority.

The contest for power and "control of the town" has centered in five
[212] blocks of competition: (1) the opposition of new young leaders with skills
[191] in speaking Spanish, literacy, and knowledge of the idiom of behavior in
[756] the national culture to the established succession of an age-dominated authority system; (2) the challenge by the civil authority to the control of the curers who rely on power derived from possession of an animal spirit; (3) the struggle for political power among factions based on new economic enterprises; (4) the contest among local caciques for domination; and (5) the conflict among religious functionaries. The series of events in which these contests have crystallized and brought about a reorganization

554
621
794

of political relations is summarized for each of these conflict areas. Most of 578
the events recorded below are transcriptions of informants' statements 177
given in Tzeltal. I have chosen this method to show how the people interpret 178
incidents and how this leads to cognitive restructuring. [128]

The Conflict among Civil Officials

In the period of consolidation since the revolution, the crucial issue in 621
determining the allocation of power among local civil authorities has been 555
that of incorporating men who have special abilities to deal with external 212
authority without upsetting an age-ranked system. Prior to the 1950s these 177
skills were rare—in 1920 only four young men could sign their names and 178
read. The civil careers of two men, Ceferino, a native of the town, and Augustín, a revistido Indian from Huistán, illustrate the different courses taken by this new leadership in the post-revolutionary period of the 1930s. Ceferino was included in the given structure of power while Augustín used his skills in dealing with Ladinos to gain personal power. Ceferino
was one of the first four men of the town to learn to read and write. The 159
civil authorities recognized his potential usefulness in the town hall, and 212
succeeded in incorporating him in an honorific but powerless position as 621
scribe. He described his introduction into local government:

> *After I got out of school, the town saw that I knew how to write. Formerly there was no one who knew how to write. In the town hall the judges and president needed someone to write down the contributions and the payment for the government agents. Therefore, when the civil authority changed in the new year, they talked to my mother. As was the custom* [624]
> *then, four regidores came to "raise" me, bringing a bottle of trago as a gift* [273]
> *for my mother. She did not drink it alone. Together with the regidores we finished the trago. After finishing the trago, the first regidor began to speak to my mother in the patʔoʔtan, saying, "I am going to bring one of your children, one of your offspring to the place where we look and where we see [reference to town hall]. We ask this favor because he knows how to write. Therefore the judges and the president ordered me to come and raise him and take out his soil, his mud, for this duty for this obligation.*

159

212 621 *We shall go with your child, your offspring to pass the holy day, the holy year. Thank you, thanks to your heart that you permit your child, your offspring to go. Now we go to receive the holy post with all the elders. The spirit of your child, your offspring shall learn."*

When the fourth regidor finished the pat?o?tan, my mother spoke: "Thank you, Take care of him. I do not want him to return to me drunk. He hasn't yet learned to drink."

I went out with two of the regidores on my right side and the other two on the left. When we arrived, the first judge spoke to us in the pat?o?tan: "You have brought before us our writer. It is well that you arrived with him. Enter and sit down."

I sat down in the middle of the regidores. When we sat down, the first judge and the president began to speak. All were gathered in the town hall. [Ceferino then listed all the civil officials by name, a feat of memory which I shall not repeat here.]

[273] *We sat down and they brought in two liters of trago. They began the pat?o?tan, and after the pat?o?tan the third regidor came to measure the trago. He gave the first measure to the president, the second to the first judge, the third to the second judge, the fourth to me, the writer. And I was not accustomed much to drink liquor. I took the trago and I drank it. It was killing me. It came out my nose. The judges and regidores saw my suffering when it came out my nose. They patted my back, and with some difficulty the trago went down. Thus with suffering and with trouble, I learned to drink trago. But then I got drunk. I felt drunk, and I told the judge and regidores that I was going to die. The first judge ordered the regidor to go with me to my house.*

He said, "Go leave him in his house because his mother said that I should return him to his house. See that you hand over her poor son to his mother."

[593] *Since I did not have a wife—I was a bachelor—they gave me to my mother. My mother said, "Thank you." They ordered my mother to send me the next day because we had to see how another day passed.*

When I left in 1925, I didn't return to the town hall until 1936 when the pueblo asked me to stay as president.

In the strategy of incorporating new leadership, these tactics are employed. 621

1. The four regidores are assigned the task of bringing the novice [624]
scribe to the town authorities. They are the official recruiters for civil and religious office.

2. The request is made to the parent of the appointed scribe in the formal speech of the pat?o?tan. The appeal is cast in terms of the sacred nature of the task with reference to the "holy" nature of the post to be undertaken on this "holy hour, holy day and holy year."

3. The contractual relationship is initiated as always with a drink- [203]
ing session. The scribe is introduced into the drinking order as fourth in rank. The officials show solicitude as he is taught to drink "the gift of the gods and the ancestors." Once the gift of liquor has been accepted, the recipient has no recourse except to fulfill the obligation.

These tactics, used also in other contractual arrangements, were inade- 621
quate to the task of inducting foreign Indians living in the township into 609
the traditional hierarchy. In 1929, a Huistecan Indian, Augustín, who had 622
worked as a laborer in a finca within the township, became president. Al- 191
though he could not read, he was able to speak Spanish fluently. He suc- 423
ceeded in getting the first ejido grant under the land reform act of 1927.

During his term of office, Augustín was accused of abusing his authority on several occasions, as the following account shows:

When I was very young, my father told me about this land case. Augustín 159
was president then. He tried to get land from my uncle's father-in-law, 622
Juan. My uncle, Bartolo, defended his father-in-law's right to the land be- 661
cause he had good friends in Tuxtla. Augustín spoke Spanish very well, but he did not know how to read. Since my uncle knew how to read well, he gained the case. Augustín was angry. He invited all the curers to the town hall and ordered the police to bring in my uncle. My uncle was given something in a cup of liquor, and in three days he died.

Even if this story is untrue, or distorted because of the family relation- 622 661
ship of the narrator and the victim, it reveals the sense of being exploited 609

622 or abused by leaders from outside the community. Stories by other infor-
661 mants indicate that Augustín took advantage of his power as president.
609 He was accused of charging high fines in court and pocketing the money. Finally a case against him was brought to the Ministerio Publico in the departmental capital. The denunciation is recounted by Ceferino, the scribe, who replaced him as president:

> 159 *The court's decision was that Augustín had to return the three hundred*
> 622 *and fifty pesos that he had forced out of Juan in the land case. Augustín*
> 661 *claimed that it was difficult for him to pay the fine. He said he would pay*
> 609 *it in installments. Juan wanted it right away. After a month, the money*
> [692] *still was not handed over. I spoke to the Ministerio Publico who told Augustín to sell his cattle. The pueblo wanted to seize the cattle. Augustín got frightened, and said he would sell his cattle. He sold them. After this he never returned to work in the pueblo.*
>
> *There were no killings in this affair. Eight days after he gave the money, Augustín came to the town hall with a pistol. I noticed it and said, "Better come in an register this pistol." He ignored this and spoke to the judge for a while.*
>
> *I told a policeman, "Go get the pistol and register it." The policeman was afraid. I asked him, "Why are you afraid?" He said, "I am afraid." I said, "You have turned into a woman."*
>
> *The policeman seized Augustín's arms. I went behind and took the pistol out of his hand. Augustín said, "Why are you taking my pistol? I have committed no crime."*
>
> *I replied, "You came to bother the people here." I took away the pistol.*
>
> *Augustín also knew how to wear a watch. His son bought it from a thief for one hundred and twenty-five pesos. We also took his watch because it was stolen. I told him, "Go look for work and earn money. The Ministerio Publico has given orders that you cannot continue working here. You cannot rob here any more."*
>
> *He went away for two months, and then came back to get his things and moved to Teopisca.*

• 621 Despite this successful denunciation, Augustín's son, Juan, tried to "get
609 control of the town." He and the other Huistecans of the barrio of Yeta-
578

witz had formed a small *cacicazgo* (supporters of a cacique) of armed 621
men. Because of their influence with departmental officials since the land 609
grant, they had secured an order to reassign lots in the center, putting one 578
family from Yetawitz in each block. The reaction of the townspeople to this "invasion" of barrio Indians was immediate and conclusive, as Ceferino's account reveals:

> *The owners of the house lots here objected to having their lots seized. They went to a lawyer in San Cristóbal, and they also had the help of the professor here. He was a good professor. We walked with the professor. The pueblo was united. We did not have fear. We were in accord with the principles. The people from Yetawitz went to another lawyer in San Cristóbal. They got an order that the people of the pueblo would have to admit the people of Yetawitz. We returned to the lawyer. He asked where these people were from. We said they were from Huistán. They were well armed. Because of this, we went to take over their arms.*
>
> *When we arrived at their house, Juan asked, "What are you here for?" We answered, "We came to get your rifles."*
>
> *They refused to give them up, but we seized their property. We tied up the men and carried them up to the pueblo. We dragged them like dogs up to the jail and put them in.*
>
> *They asked, "Why are you putting us in jail?" and we answered, "Tomorrow we will arrange the case."*
>
> *Four police stayed there. The next morning I came to see them. They had planned to go to Las Casas, but we ordered the saddles taken off the horses that were in readiness. We tried them, and they no longer bothered the pueblo.*

The Huistecan's attempt to seize power reveals several significant fac- 621
tors in the genesis of community political institutions. In the 1930s in 423
Chiapas, the land reform act of 1927 was taking effect. Translation of law 178
into reality in the local community required the drive and leadership of 177
the Indians themselves. Literacy and Spanish-speaking skills were of even [212]
greater importance than before. The Indians of the center who had not [191]
been forced to work in the fincas and who had sufficient resources to resist contact with the outside economy were not in a position to take a leader-

621 ship role in the new political setting. As a result, it was the marginal Indians,
423 outsiders who had come as did Augustín to work as *baldios* (laborers)
178 on the finca near the town, that were the drivng force behind the demand
177 for land. This was the basis for the new leadership in the early days
[609] of land reform. The ejido program, conceived of by Cárdenas as a basis
for political development of the campesinos, (Brandenburg 1964) gave
these marginal Indians the opportunity to rise to positions of influence in
local government. The reluctance of the townspeople to take action
[754] against Augustín derived in part from fear, since he reputedly backed his
use of force with witchcraft—the imported kind of witchcraft in which
poisons are used instead of spiritual force.

622 Ceferino, the man who finally deposed Augustín, was a member of the
554 traditional community, but because he had been impoverished by burying
177 four members of his family in the typhoid epidemic of 1928, he had been
forced to work in the fincas. There he had learned Spanish and some of
178 the ways of the dominant society. His leadership potential had developed
[191] in the role of *caporal,* or gang leader of the pickers in the coffee finca, and
[464] he had been a leader in the trek of recruited laborers down to the fincas in
Soconusco. Under the old authority structure, in which all officials including
the president were recruited through the hierarchy, he would never
have reached a prestigious position. But in this crisis, he was the only man
willing to confront the incumbent and take over the operation of civil affairs.

622 Ceferino did not take advantage of the situation to emerge as a cacique
554 himself. As he explained in his narrative, "The pueblo was united. We
did not have fear. We were in accord with the principles." The way in
which he had been introduced into the cabildo as scribe had successfully
neutralized his own ambitions to attain power, if he had any. He accepted
the ideal of a united pueblo, recognizing the authority of the principales.

621 The increasing scope and frequency of relationships between the nation
177 and the locality since the revolution has emphasized the roles of president
178 and síndico at the expense of the authority and control exercised by the
principales. The ceremonial significance of the principales in rituals is retained
as a symbol of continuity in the change of officials, but their func-

621
tions have decreased. Their major responsibility is to hold the plate in 177 which the contributions for the fiestas are deposited by the police. Formerly, 178 the fact that the principales also held the money until it was spent lent dignity and prestige to this function. Now that the money is turned over to the treasurer, who also keeps the accounts, passing the plate gives them a sense of shame. When I asked why the principales lost authority, the first response was cast in terms of behavior: my informant, a former president, pointed out that it was because they did not attend the town hall every day. When I asked why they did not appear, the reply was reformulated in functional terms: they did not come because the laws and acts that are raised and interpreted in the town hall are written in Spanish, and the principales could not read or write. As a consequence, the balance of power has shifted to the posts of president and síndico, while the framework in which the officials act has remained.

CHALLENGE BY THE CIVIL OFFICIALS OF THE POWER OF THE CURERS 621

787
The autonomy of the highland Indian corporate community has rested on the retention of social control by local leaders. This local leadership, 177 which has survived over four hundred years of domination by Spanish colonial 178 and national rule, is based on power derived from two sources: (1) control over life and death by men who claim to possess an animal spirit and/or (2) ability to devine or predict the future, such as the calendar priests have (Nuñez de la Vega 1702:19).[1] The belief in power derived 000

---

[1] Bishop Nuñez de la Vega repeatedly inveighs against the "maestros Nahualistas." This is summarized in an excerpt, which I have translated, from his book (1702:19): [754] [171]

> Almost two hundred years after the light of evangelism dawned, the Indians in most of the Kingdom of New Spain and Guatemala are found full of their primitive errors, superstitions, and misdeeds such that there is hardly a single pueblo where each year there are not deaths brought about by witches, and houses and families known to have, as an inheritance acquired from father to son, evil powers so abominable that they are viewed with great fear by the rest of the Indians. With only a glance and certain words, with which they invoke the Devil, they can end life or cause their victim to go mad with great pains and stupendous illnesses, and the result is that they inflict their rivals for very slight pretexts. We exile them and other spiritual performers from the church, and when the ministers and judges try to verify what happened to the sick ones, all

776 The belief in power derived
174 from animal spirits was probably influenced by the Toltec belief in nahualism, or transformation of people after death into animals (Calnek 1962:22). The Toltec belief originated in the period of Mexican influence but had many local indigenous manifestations (Foster 1944). The integra-
793 tion of the two systems of power was brought about by calendar priests
787 controlling the distribution of animal spirits (Calnek 1962:19). The degree
754 of retention of calendrical knowledge and of belief in witchcraft gives us
177 one of the best indices of acculturation in the area.[2] In Tzoʔontahal there
178 is no remnant of calendar divination for ceremonial or predictive use.
776 However, witchcraft based on belief in animal spirits continues to be an important factor in the contest for power. The technique of secrecy, of pre-
[621] senting a united front in the face of attempts by the outside Ladinos to
[609] tamper with the local social control system, persists to this day in the town.

621 An endemic problem in communities dominated by belief in witchcraft
626 is control over the evil power of witches. The traditional control system in
754 Tzoʔontahal operated through the guardianship of three sets of power-
769 holders who checked up on each other: the ancestors, the curers, and the
756 judges. The guardianship of the ancestors consisted in preventing any
177 child possessed of a swayohel from the devil from growing up to abuse his
178 power and in keeping any evil spirits from entering the town. The curers,

---

[754] [171] the Indians, whether out of cowardice or deceit, withdraw their accusation or claims, so that it is impossible to convict the evildoers for punishment; and for lack of sufficient proof they cannot be punished, or if there is enough basis to put them in prison, they sometimes disappear and flee to another jurisdiction and hide, denying their place of origin or changing their name.

[2] In Oxchuk, calendar experts with the ability to divine the future still set the days for carrying out Catholic fiestas according to the twenty-day Maya ceremonial cycle. Each of the spirits symbolizing the twenty days wielded the power of good or evil. This provided the basis for predicting. When Villa Rojas studied the town in the 1940s, elders of patrilineal lineages controlled the behavior of members by causing sickness brought by their *lab*, or animal spirit (Villa Rojas 1947). In San Pedro Chenalhó, the principales exercise power through their *wayhel*, or animal spirit (Guiteras Holmes 1961). Nahuales of leaders of the patrilineages and principales are feared and respected in Larraínzar, although there is a growing discontent with their oppressive control (Holland 1963). Men believed to have thirteen nahuales figure as guardians and avengers for individuals in Pinola society, although the Indians of this community no longer have a hierarchy of civil offices through which their prestige can be publicly validated (Hermitte 1964).

621
626

as the direct agents of the ancestors, guarded the streets of their own side 754
of the dual division. The judges, with the supervision of the principales, 769
were responsible for guarding against the abuse of power by the curers or 756
others possessing a swayohel in their review of witchcraft cases in the 177
town hall. The three sets of functionaries—ancestors, curers, and judges— 178
are classified in a lexicon of role function in the stem *meʔ . . tat . .*, common to the terms applied to them, meʔtiktatik, meʔiltatil, and meʔeštateš.[3]

The system of control over the use of power has been in a state of uneasy tension. In a series of incidents recounted below, the growing suspicion that the judges and the principales were not countering the witches because of their fear of falling victim to them, and that the curers themselves were exercising the witchcraft becomes apparent.

In the following case, the system of checks and balances was upset by the entry into the presidency in 1940 of Mam Nicolás, the leading curer of Allannantik. Nicolás combined the skills of operating in the traditional culture with those of dealing with the Ladino world. Despite the fact that he was a graduate of the boarding school operating in the town in the 1930s, which had far more extensive effects in acculturation as well as formal education than any prior school, he practiced curing. The case is recounted by Ceferino, the scribe:

> *Formerly the dead president Mam Nicolás left at midday from the* 159
> *town hall and went to his house where he ate a meal. A neighbor, Fran-* 621
> *cisco, came to talk to him. They drank a half a liter of trago, and then* 754
> *began to drink a second and got drunk. They began to say goodbye, and* 682
> *Francisco left Nicolás' house. When Nicolás saw that Francisco went out, he grabbed his shotgun. He saw that Francisco was now far away, and he fired many shots. One got him right in his back. When Francisco*
> *felt it, he shouted. The police heard him and went to get the judges who* [692]
> *came to see also. His [Francisco's] wife came. She raised his head and cried when she saw he was dead. An elder sister brought a new mat to* carry him.

---

[3] The suffixes *-el*, and *-tik* refer to pronominal forms, as in "you judges" and "our ancestors." *-il* is an article, as in "the curers." In prayer, the ancestors may be addressed in the second person, or the judges may be referred to with the first-person-plural possessive, but these forms are rare in those contexts. [193]

159 *carry him. When the new mat arrived, the judge ordered that he be*
621 *brought to his house. The judges saw that the shot had entered well.*
754 *They ordered the police to seize Nicolás and put him in prison. They saw*
682 *that Francisco died.*

The night entered, and the judges ordered the police to guard the killer throughout the night. At dawn he remained in prison and stayed there the entire day. On the third day, they "took his heart" [questioned him] to see what his crime was. He said that Francisco had blamed him for giving witchcraft and that it was not his fault, that he was not a witch. He got angry and shot Francisco. The judge heard the case and raised an act. They sent him to San Cristóbal and the síndico, Simón, took over the presidency. He remained in power in the pueblo.

People heard that the new president could not arrange things in the town hall. Illness entered the pueblo. Word was left that Juan, Ebaristo, and Antonio had brought in the illness. All those who "knew how to make fiestas" [reference to curers functioning in curing ritual] gathered together in the town hall. The two leading curers came with a garrafón of liquor. The curers drank until nighttime.

The president remained in prison. When the night had entered well, he slept. And although he had heard many rumors about what was going to happen, he slept well. At dawn, the president was "of one heart" [content]. A policeman arrived and said that Antonio had been brought to jail.

"Why?" asked the president. "For what crime has he been put in prison?"

The policeman said that it was for witchcraft, and that they had gone out to get the other witch Juan, but he had escaped into the Cave of the Star. Although there were fifteen men after him, they couldn't seize him. They had also gone to catch Ebaristo, but he was not in his house, and they did not find him. The crime of the three was that they had brought in the illness.

Meanwhile, everyone was saying that Nicolás was also responsible for letting the illness in the town. People said that he had vowed that if the authorities seized him, he would let in the illness. The townspeople got drunk.

Eight men of Alannantik wanted the interim president, Simón to remain as president. But the people of Ahk'olnantik did not want him to remain as president. The townspeople began to talk, saying, "Why should he remain as president since he stole twenty bulls? We don't want him. Let us get another president. We shall walk with Ceferino." 159 621 754 682

They wanted me for president since I was first regidor. It is for this reason that I entered as president, but I didn't think that I would be able to stay on as president. Simón received an order from the [state] government that he should return as president. He came with soldiers, and when they took me out of office, the lieutenant said to Simón, "Now you enter."

And so I gave over the archives and seals and everything in the presidency to Simón, and I left the presidency. And the people saw that it was the order of the government, and they did not say anything. The town remained silent.

The incident is given as it was related to me in Tzeltal. I have sorted out the steps in which the conflict developed in order to clarify its meaning.

1. The traditional checks and balance system of the civil authority over the curers was initially upset by the entry of a leading curer into the post of president.
2. When he committed a murder while in office, the judges seized control and had him put in prison. [682] [692]
3. His replacement by the síndico who was from the same side of the dual division, aroused the opposition of the people of the opposite side, Ahk'olmantik, who believed that the epidemic, which followed the president's removal from power, was caused by the curers of Alannantik under the direction of the president who was in jail. [624] [731] [754]
4. The leaders of the revolt in Ahk'olnantik chose as their replacement the first regidor, Ceferino, who was from their side. [624]
5. Leaders from Alannantik rejected this replacement and were able to get official backing from the state government to replace their representative.

The process illustrates the way in which a conflict, precipitated by a clash between civil authorities and the curers, was cast into the idiom of struc- 621 756 578

621
756 tural opposition between the two sides of the dual division. In this case,
578 resolution came with the intercession of federal troops.
[648] When curing was a controlled profession, with a hierarchy legitimizing
756 entry and exit, the power of the curers was directed toward guarding the
178 village against evil as well as curing. In the 1940s, the loss of one leader by death and the other's jail sentence meant loss of control over entry into
[754] the profession. A growing suspicion and discontent with the curers as a group, laying upon them the responsibility of much of the witchcraft, is reflected in the account of another older informant:

> *Formerly when the curers J. C., A. A., S. K., and J. D. were alive, they walked in common. The people were in accord with the curers because they watched over the peublo. They knew about medicine, and so people of Alannantik went to ask them favors to cure them and also the people of Ahk'olnantik went to ask them favors.*
>
> *But then, after they died* [*about 1940*], *the principales did not dare fight the curers because they had animal spirits, and the principales themselves didn't—they were just honorable people.*

621 The doubt about the civil authority's control over the curers has in-
756 creased since young leaders have taken the leadership in the town. One in-
178 formant said, "When there are young people in the cabildo, they can't keep control of the curers, but the old people in the cabildo can." With the relaxation of restrictions on entry into the curing profession, following the loss of leadership and the ranked hierarchy, curers were no longer re-
[273] strained by professional standards. When drunk, they bragged of their
[754] power to do evil as well as to do good. The first killing of a curer accused
683 of being a witch occurred in 1937. He was working in Pinola when he
621 was shot. The dead curer's widow wanted to bring his body back to be
[178] buried in the town cemetery, but the request was refused by the judges. This suggests that the town authorities agreed with the accusation, since it is the custom to return the dead to the town for burial. Other assassinations by individuals occurred in 1943 and in 1950. During this period, the civil officials sanctioned the assassinations of persons accused and convicted of witchcraft. When someone wished to kill a man suspected of witchcraft, they would go to the town hall and ask for permission. After a re-

view of the case by the judges and the other civil authorities, the president 683
would have the suspected witch locked up in the local jail and then give 621
the key to his enemy. The following story illustrates this procedure:

> *When we were still part of the township of Teopisca [sometime before 1931] F. went and asked permission of the authorities to kill his enemy, a curer, whom he thought was bewitching his brother-in-law. The president arrived at the house of the suspected witch with the order to imprison him. He said that they were going to Teopisca to put him in jail. The group of authorities set off with the suspected witch. On the way another group met them and asked them where they were going. The President replied, "To Teopisca." The group which had encountered them asked them if they would like a drink to "heat their body." They gave one cup and then another. They then cut up the suspected witch with a machete and put his body in the cave of meʔtiktatik that goes to Chiapa de Corzo. When the widow enquired the next day where her husband was, the president said that the man must have gone to the finca.*

After telling this story, my informant concluded, "Therefore, little by little, the pueblo is getting better because we scared the curers with the permission of the president to kill them." He felt that this was the point at which the power of the curers, who were more and more frequently being accused as witches, was broken. [829]

While the usual course of action, once a man was accused of witchcraft, 756
was to kill him so that there would be no danger of revenge, the following 627
case illustrates punishment by beating. [683]

> *The time was 1935. There was a very bad curer who stole much cattle. One man who heard that he had stolen his cattle wanted to kill him, but the curer met the man and killed him in an old house. The town authorities seized the curer and forced him to pay one thousand pesos for the bull. The principales punished him by tying him to a tree and beating him five or six times. They beat him well for the town. After they beat him they brought him to prison in San Cristóbal and gave him over to the Ministerio Publico to arrange the case. He did not return to the pueblo but went to another place. In five years he returned to his pueblo.*

756 627 *When he arrived here, he did not hear any word that they would kill him. He persisted in his custom of stealing. And the pueblo seized him and put him in prison. The whole town seized him although he had heard no word.*

They tied him to a tree and said to him, "You do not have shame. You are a curer, father of the pueblo, [respect term for curer], and yet you behaved badly and truly stole. The town sees you are a bad man, Emilio. They call you their father, but now I am going to tell you that you ought not to be called father. You're a bad one."

He wanted to be called father, but he was only a bad one. He returned again to San Cristóbal because of two crimes. He did not hear the words. He remained in prison, and when he came out someone else came and killed him.

756 682 178 Since 1938, nine of the thirty-seven homicide cases on which I collected data (Table 29) were killings of curers. The increasing frequency of such killings reveals the loss of faith in the guardianship role of the curers, but along with this, retention of belief in their power to work evil.

731 756 754 627 621 In the series of successful confrontations, the civil authority has gained strength and overcome some of the fear of the people. In May 1964, during a severe contagion of measles, a rumor started that the disease was being spread because of witchcraft. The president called together the curers. The consensus of this gathering was that a certain curer of Alannantik had buried the "heat" which was causing the deaths in the milpa of his enemy. The people of Alannantik gathered with the curers and the civil officials in the milpa of the "enemy" to dig it out. The curers dug out a charcoal brazier which is the sign of illness and threw it in the Cave of the Star. [683] That evening the suspected witch was killed, presumably by his neighbors.

756 621 627 754 In the most recent confrontation between the civil authorities and an individual curer, in March 1966, the civil authorities showed a united front in denouncing the use of witchcraft to threaten any official. The entire group of practicing curers from both sides of the dual division were called to witness the denunciation before the assembled civil officials in the town hall. The only one absent was the curer accused of attempting to cut short the life of the president because of envy of his position. The assembled

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 248]

756
• 621
627
754

group walked to the hill where the curer had been reported practicing his witchcraft. There they collected the evidence: fourteen candles of all colors, crosses of wire placed on a photograph, and a gourd. The curers present lifted the evidence and threw it in the river to get rid of the evil. A transcription of the proceedings in the town hall is given below:

President: "We are gathered together here because something which is not good has happened. See here, Tatinel [*to the leading curer*], *we do not know if it is witchcraft or not."*

First Curer Feliciano, of Yetawitz: "The old men [*elder curers*] *have pulsed our children. All the pueblo has helped. We have just brought in the candles. He is a very bad witch. We walked out there and we found it. For this we have gathered together, but if there is an owner of the witchcraft, we have not heard."*

Second Curer Emilio, of Alannantik: "But this owner is not good. Thus spoke my compadre. This is not good. So my compadre and Mam Pelise [*Feliciano, first curer to speak*] *have spoken. Whoever did it has not advised us. The ancestors did not want this. Now who wants it? Who speaks with the holy word? You do not announce whether it is a curer or whether it is or not. We do not know where it is or what it is that he did. But when someone does give an illness, it is a good custom to see where this comes from. This we do not know. It is for this we went to the cave to know where he found it."*

President: "Therefore we had to look for it and see who did it; whether it is someone who knows how to do both witchcraft and curing. But he will pay here in the presidency for what he did, because we are going to announce it, we are going to reveal the crime. Now your hearts are content and truly you cannot do it. Now we know a little, compadre. Truly we have seen and know where it [*the magic*] *was kept."*

Feliciano: "Now you speak a little to God who gave his little child. And what if tomorrow you should come? Now is the time we speak to God, we speak to the Virgin Mother. Don't kill and don't give suffering. Better not do anything. Please don't do anything at night; please do nothing as I have told you. Thus your children [*the younger curers*] *have* *heard our hearts. The people will hear that we didn't do anything. The true curers looked. We came to the place and we found it."* 756 621 •

The curers left the town hall, one by one, saying the patʔoʔtan to the judges as they left. The judges remained. 627 754

President: "We have heard clearly what we waited here to hear. They have brought back a little soda."

Judge: "So it is for your work [referring to the soda], what you went to do there [in the hills]."

President: "It is good what you did, but you are afraid because of that." Judges laugh.

756 621 The curers in public performances nominally recognize as leading curers the two major speakers for the group, Feliciano of Yetawitz and Emilio of Alannantik. However, these men are not recognized as true leaders. Feliciano lives in the despised barrio of Yetawitz and is associated with the kuriketik, (the inhabitants of the colonia of San Vicente), while Emilio himself has been accused of witchcraft. But the situation required someone to represent the group from each side, and so there was compliance with this temporary role.

756 754 621 627 In the public gathering, the curers refrained from accusing anyone, and denied that they had knowledge of the witch. The older curer (not recognized as leader but serving in the place of an elder) warned the group not to kill anyone as a result of the meeting. That evening, the president and his brother announced on the loudspeaker of the cantina that they did know who was trying to murder the president, that it was the curer who was absent, and that he should desist. The curer responded by announcing on another cantina loudspeaker that he was innocent. On the following day, the accused appeared in the town hall with two family-sized bottles of beer. He said that he did not want the president to continue accusing him, since he was not guilty and had truly been sick. (He had consulted the I.N.I. clinic nurse rather than one of his colleagues and had received treatment for a headache. [156] This was commented upon by his opponents, who interpreted it as showing his lack of faith in traditional curing practices.)

756 754 • 621 627 The open confrontation by the civil authorities with the suspected witch, in which they warned him to stop before violence resulted, represents a new strategy in the contest between officials and curers. Formerly even when there was strong suspicion against a man, the principales and judges kept quiet. If they acted, it was to kill the suspect without forewarning. The new strategy reveals the position of strength from which they now operate. That the president could joke in the town hall about the fear of the judges in dealing with the accused curer (see his final remark above) is indicative of a changed attitude. Incidents such as that of the curer consulting the clinic nurse instead of his fellow curers, which was noted and commented upon by the brother of the president, may further serve to undermine the townspeople's belief in the power of the curers.

In the weeks following the incident, the president and his brother discussed the incident, pointing out their fearlessness in openly confronting the witch. The curers clearly tried to deny any responsibility as a group with the remark: "Whoever did it did not advise us." They expressed the feeling that it is against professional ethics: "Whoever did it is a very bad witch"; but they refuse to name him or admit knowledge of who did it. "We do not know where it is or what it is that he did." The behavior of the curers in this incident is clearly defensive and stems from their loss of control and initiative.

665 621

POLITICAL PARTIES AND FACTIONS

In 1950 the first contest for the post of president was started by two brothers who had secured the backing of the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN). Never before had anyone initiated his own candidacy outside the traditional nomination procedure through the old officials in the town hall. The brothers lived in the new barrio of Yut Hok, the ejido land grant of Ahk'olnantik. The candidacy disturbed the customary alternation of posts between Ahk'olnantik and Alannantik. Threatened by the imbalance, the leaders of Alannantik secured the backing of the Partido Revolucionario Institutionalizado (PRI) for their candidate. The PAN candidate won the election. However, he was never able to consolidate political support. At his death, he had no successor, and "the town remained in peace." 665

In this first political contest, the conflict was interpreted as opposition 621 [829]
between the dual divisions. Factional disputes and the sense of political re- [578]
sponsibility and control were contained within these parameters, and any
conflict was conceived of as a threat to territorial balancing mechanisms.

The new factions that have developed since 1963 are tied to economic 621
rather than territorial competition. In 1960 the first truck-owning coopera- 474
tive was organized under the leadership of the former Ladino secretary. 471
The twenty shareholders of the town had only a small amount of capital 177
in the truck, and the controlling interest was in the hands of the secre- 178
tary's wife. The cooperative was merely a device to gain business in car- 494
rying pottery and wheat from the town to the market centers. In 1963 a
new truck-owning cooperative was organized by local Indians. The two
brothers, Santiago and José, secured capital to buy the truck from thirty
residents of the town without any assistance from outside. The sharehold-
ers of the new cooperative came from both sides of the dual division, and
from the outlying barrios.

When the leaders of the new cooperative tried to get permits and certifi- 474
cates to license the car and the operator, they were refused by the town 621
president who was a shareholder of the first cooperative. The Indians then 666
hired a Ladino truck driver from the neighboring town, and the son of one of the shareholders served as assistant. They realized that it was necessary to get control of the local political positions in order to extend their operations. With the help of the schoolteacher, they got eighty-one signatures on the petition for the PRI candicacy of one of the brothers, José, in the presidential nomination of 1964. He was opposed by a ladinoized Indian living in one of the barrios who was backed by the Ladino secretary who was leader of the competing trucking cooperative. The opponent did not have a chance of winning, as the leaders of the new cooperative pointed out, because of two strikes against him: he was not a resident of the center and he had only PAN backing. The Indians are aware that nothing can be gained politically by a PAN-backed president since PRI is now the party in control of regional and national offices.

After José's election, the Indian truck driver was able to get a driving li- 621
cense. With the help of the schoolmaster, the cooperative was able to get 474
493

• 621 474 493 permission to extend operations to hot country where the Indians of the town held ejido land. This territory had been controlled by the state-wide trucking sindicate whose monopoly was protected by government permits. On the basis that they were poor, nonprofit-making ejidatarios, the Indians were granted the right to truck corn from the ejido colonies to the highlands. Whenever the cooperative leaders planned to go to the [291] departmental capital to make their appeals, the schoolmaster counseled them to wear their Indian costume—the white shirt and pants with red sash, sandals, and woolen kotonču—in order to play the role of simple campesinos more convincingly. He was aware of the effectiveness of this pose in pro-Indian governmental circles.

665 The PRI leadership in the department capital is neither aware of nor interested in the local factions which seek their support. Their concern is only that the vote is solidly behind regional and national candidates of the party, and they support the group that can mobilize the largest number of votes. A policy of favoritism toward Indians, based on an ideology of *indigenismo,* pro-Indianism, is coupled with a policy of permitting local autonomy. The national committee's program for promoting literacy has never reached this community nor any that I know of in the area. The party's promotion of Indian welfare consists of supporting demands made by Indian constituents and bringing them to the attention of civil service officials assigned to these functions. Party officials thus act as intermediaries between the voters and the bureaucracy of the government, channeling complaints and demands.

621 177 178 181 In the development of factions around new economic interests, the Indians have shifted from an ideology in which the dialectic of conflict was cast in traditional dual-division opposition to one in which the conflict is seen as Indian versus Ladino domination of enterprises. Since these interests cut across the territorial divisions, the economic factions have not crystallized along territorial lines. It is this shift in perspective which makes [665] for the "qualitative" change in local political organization.

COMPETITION BETWEEN CACIQUES

622 563 There are several dimensions to the role of cacique in Tzoˀontahal. First, it is a role created by outside interests and occupied by someone mar-

794 while he was fiscal. He let control over the key to the church and the do-
793 nation boxes slip into the hands of the priest. His opponents accused him
of weakness and failure to act in the interest of the town. The careers of
[685] these fiscales illustrate the pitfalls for those filling the post. First, there is
the temptation for personal gain, since the fiscal has access to the money of
the saints: in the past three fiscales have been charged with robbery. Sec-
[178] ond, there is the problem that the fiscal serves two masters, the priest and
the head cofrade, each of whom has different standards of conduct for the
role: when the selection of the fiscal was in the hands of the cofrades, they
chose a man who knew the patʔoʔtan and who was to deal directly with
the curers in rituals at the cave of the ancestors and in the homes of the
cofrades; now he is chosen by the priest who prefers a young, literate man.
793 If the fiscal follows the commands of the priest, he runs into problems
794 with the cofrades. This was the difficulty with Antonio, who was put out
578 of office by the cofrades because he yielded to the priest's demands to im-
prove the convento and the church. As long as the conflict in interests be-
tween the priest and the traditional authorities exist, there is no successful
position for the fiscal to take.

CONFLICT AND SOCIAL CHANGE

621 In the contest for leadership which has and is occurring, the following
177 observations can be made on the basis of the events described.
178

[212] 1. The community has successfully incorporated the young, literate men into the framework of the traditional hierarchy. This has been accomplished by expanding the scope of activities of the president and síndico and by relieving them of serving in the lower posts of the hierarchy.

2. The ceremonial role of the principales serves as a symbol of continuity in government both in the tie they have with the past and in the annual changeover of officials.

[609] 3. The threat of foreign Indians in the township misusing their skills in dealing with the outside world has been overcome by removing them from office and preventing them from filling high posts.

621
177
178

4. In a series of confrontations, the civil officials have challenged the social control functions of the curers. Witch-killings in which many of the victims have been curers have minimized but not overcome the power of these men. [756]

5. The priest has succeeded in establishing control over the church, [193] but the Indians may yet ~~succeed in~~ deposing him, a plan they were putting into effect when I left town.

The Indians are now aware of their rights to limit—or eliminate if necessary—the self-appointed caciques. The new cacique promotes the community welfare not only in his rhetoric but in the services he performs for the officials. His involvement in political affairs is tolerated, not encouraged, and the officials are ready to turn to alternative sources of aid in their activities. 641 622 177 178

The involvement of the PRI in local elections has not introduced a new center of power in the political arena. Political factions are based on economic interests contained within the town, and the autonomy of the town has in no way been affected by leadership from party headquarters in the state capitol. The community and the party use each other for their own ends in almost complete ignorance of what is occurring in the domain of the other. 665 621 178

The system of beliefs and understandings has changed along with these organizational changes. The most significant change has been the waning belief in the guardianship of the ancestors. The absence of the curers at the fiesta of the caves means that they no longer have this ritual occasion to validate their claims by communicating with the ancestors. The loss of leadership and of a hierarchy of prestige within the ranks of curers has removed internal controls over the profession and further undermined their position. The diminishing respect with which they are treated in the town hall and the increasing number of murders of curers accused of witchcraft is directly related to the loss of belief in their power as guardians. Since they were not an integral part of the civil-religious hierarchy, as the curers were in Oxchuk (Villa Rojas 1947), this has not upset the hierarchy, but it has changed the balance of power in the wider community. 769 756 178 [683]

The diminishing significance of the leadership of the principales is tied 621 756 178

621 to the loss of belief in the curers. The principales were formerly conceived
756 to be overseers of the curers, men who, because of their advanced age,
178 could determine whether the curers were acting in the interest of the
town. With the loss of this social control function, along with the loss of
other functions such as holding public funds and helping the judges to interpret
the law, they have declined to the level of ceremonial figures dissociated
from political action.

621 The forms of political organization remain the same, but there has been
178 a shift in the balance of power from leaders whose authority rested on
guardianship linked with the ancestors to leaders who can deal with the
external power structure. The emergent forms of political organization
can be partially assessed in the meaning participants assign to the events
which precipitated this process of change. To paraphrase George Herbert
Mead (1938:liii) it is the "organization of perspectives" concerning the
past events and the present conditions which will effect the emergent
829 forms. The analytical problem can be phrased with the questions, "In
578 what dialectical terms is the conflict cast?" and "What changes do the
794 members of the community perceive as an outcome of the struggle?"
621 Whereas in the colonial period the conflict between the Indians and their
177 Spanish conquerers was seen as a struggle for control between Catholicism
178 and traditional religion, today the conflict is phrased as one of opposed
economic interests. In the civil sphere, factional opponents seek the support
of extra-communal power holders to gain their ends. In the religious
[793] sphere, the Indians see the conflict as one in which their control over the
church and the income derived from it is opposed to the priest's growing
influence.

829 In this reorganization of perspectives, the Indians share some of the
621 goals of the dominant society, but they continue to oppose themselves to
182 the Ladino world. For this reason they are willing to preserve the form of
the civil-religious hierarchy as a means of asserting their independence
from the dominant society. They see the community not only as a defensive
screen against the outside world, but as a springboard for entry into
the national economic and political life. They are now consciously taking
advantage of pro-Indian sentiment to secure a preferred position in this society.
Their awareness of their advantage over the deculturated Indian is

made explicit in the contrasts they make between their conditions and 829
those of the migratory mestizo laborers who work in the sawmills and 621
fincas in the area. They comment on the fact that these workers have no 182
political representation and that they and their children are illiterate and do not attend school. The significant factor is that the Indians of the corporate communities not only have advantages over the mestizo worker, but they perceive these advantages and are acting in terms of them. The [156]
preservation of community traditions is seen as a means of retaining community-owned assets and of maintaining a sense of self which is threatened or destroyed when the individual Indian enters into the national society.

The rules of strategy for moving in the direction of change are a trans- 829
formation of the rules of the game that the Indians hve played in the four 621
and a half centuries since the Conquest. The overall strategy is still defen- 178
sive and aimed at preserving local independence, but their tactics include 177
new skills acquired from Ladinos. In opposing the old power elite of the 626
curing hierarchy, the present leadership uses the same tactics of the witch- [756]
hunt that their opponents used in the past to punish deviates, but they are [754]
beginning to confront them openly when sorcery is suspected. Leaders of the new cooperatives state that their aim is to increase opportunities for the whole community, not to make individual profit.

Because the conflict has been contained within community boundaries, 621
the statement of goals remains the same. These goals include the retention 178
of control by local leaders over judgment of guilt or innocence, in ceremo- 177
nial affairs, and by all townspeople over land. This retention of local con- 185
trol is the key feature of a moving equilibrium in a model of change that puts the emphasis on continuous adjustments and adaptations. In the usual models for discussing modernization, the confrontation is conceived as one between the indigenous society and the outsider representing western influence. In Tzoʔontahal, young leaders within the community have confronted old in the stated interest of preserving tradition. Occasionally they may make alliances with the old leaders as in the conflict with the priest.

These "shifts in the focus of political power within a given system" 621
(Leach 1964:9) are the prelude to structural change. Tzoʔontahal as a case 177
178

621 177 178 example demonstrates the large input of local energies in bringing about change, both the changes that lead to internal restructuring of the distribution of power as well as those necessary in the introduction of new technology and organization of economic activity. It defeats the notion of the non-western segment of the world as a passive recipient of the gifts of the West.

121 write beliefs that give coherence to these roles. Whether these events continue to be scheduled, and in the process of being presented "prove" the postulates upon which structural relationships are based, depends upon acceptance of the belief system.

183 [192] A fundamental understanding governing behavior in Tzoʔontahal is that people ought to do as the ancestors did. Both "knowing" and "remembering" are expressed by the same verb, *ya sna,* while "learning" and "memorizing" are expressed by the verb *ya snop*. The behavioral corollary of this association between knowing and remembering is that one should accept the word of the ancestors as a guide to behavior. The importance of obeying one's elders as the intermediaries in the transfer of ways of behaving from one generation to another is stressed in child training and is restated in the prayers uttered at ritual performances enacting the ways of the ancestors.

128 In this chapter I shall consider the integration of behavior based on roles, personality, codes of morality and etiquette, and the ideological and behavorial changes which are disturbing this system.

The Role System

554 621 182 Coherence of the role system in Tzoʔontahal depends upon (1) similar premises for role recruitment and continuity in transition from one role to another; (2) alternation in office and linkage of separate domains by special offices; and (3) standardized etiquette of role interaction. Uniform standards of evaluation of performance provide a sanctioning system ensuring social integration.

561 554 562 [192] [601] *Recruitment and transition*. Relative and chronological age combined with consideration of sex are the fundamental principles for assigning role categories. The age principle categorizes the entire town in role pairs of respect and deference. Sex differentiation is not made in children until after infancy. An infant of either sex is called *ʔunin,* also a term for the new moon, until the age of eight months. The sex of parent rather than that of the child is designated: a woman calls her offspring *ʔalal* whether boy or girl, and a man calls his offspring *nič'an*. Sex distinction is

made in speaking of toddlers: boys are called *htatil* and girls *ķantzil.* 554
After five years of age, a boy is referred to as *č'in ķerem,* "little boy" and a 561
girl as *č'in ʔačiš,* "little girl." The term for younger sibling, *ķihtz'in,* 562
which is extended to all of the people younger than oneself on one's own 192
side of the dual division, is not sex marked, but the terms for all people [601]
older than oneself are. Sexual segregation begins at the age of five in sleeping [513]
arrangements as well as in public gatherings, when little boys stand [593]
with their fathers. The modifier "č'in" is dropped after the age of nine,
and the terms "kerem" and "ačiš" are used until marriage. At the age of
fifteen, a girl is referred to as *ʔantz wiłtal,* "just arriving at womanhood,"
and when she is married she is classified as an *ʔantz,* or woman. A boy is
referred to as a kerem until he is married, when he is called *ač' winiķ* or
"new man." A woman with children is referred to as *meʔeliš,* and is a
full-fledged member of her sex, the *meʔil.* A man's reference term does
not change with paternity. When a young unmarried man dies, people say
with sorrow that it was a pity "he did not try out life," and that "he did
not try out a woman."

In her youth a woman's role is tied to the reproductive cycle, but after 554
menopause she is released from the restrictions of childbearing women. 561
She need not appear as modest in public, and can drink and dance at fiestas. 562
A noticeable personality change can be seen as women move out of
the chrysalis of their reproductive cycle. Some older women begin to take [831]
a keen interest in sex, and widows in particular may have sexual relations
with young unmarried men. It is after menopause that a woman takes her
first role in ceremonials as a woman speaker.

In the man's life cycle, leadership roles are related to age. Paternal roles [593]
are the prototype for both familial and public authority positions. Thus [621]
the term for father, *tat* is the stem for the term for leader, *statal.* [192]

In the relationship between the sexes, women are considered to be under 562
the control of a male protector, either their father or husband. However, 593
there is a kind of equality between the sexes which is not found in Ladino
society. Usually there is only a small age difference between husband and [582]
wife, even in second marriages, and parents resist giving a young unmarried
girl to an older previously married man. Mutual respect is stressed in
the advice given by elders at marriage. There is no double standard for ex-

does not drink or have a record of fighting. Character traits are given 581
more significance than wealth, since the minimal differences which distin- 582
guish rich from poor can be lost within a few months if a man drinks
heavily or does not work. The close identification among siblings means [593]
that in accepting a suit the girl's parents will take into consideration not
only the boy's reputation, but those of his brothers. If they are considered
to be disobedient, lazy, or frequently drunk, their brother may have diffi-
culty finding a woman.

Positions of ceremonial importance in the household celebrations are 794
filled by any of the elders who have acquired knowledge of the prayers. 592
The nakawanehetik are chosen from among any of the bilaterally-ex- 782
tended relatives, compadres, or padrinos who have served five times in reli- 555
gious office. They are selected not only on the basis of how well they 561
know the prayers, but also on their behavior when required to drink. A [273]
man who can hold his liquor and still speak well or who quietly goes to
sleep rather than fighting when drunk is preferred. The me?il k'op is se-
lected from among the female complements of these male relatives. She ac-
quires her knowledge of the prayers in familial settings. The b'alnialetik
are chosen from the kihtz'inal (younger siblings and cousins), or from
among compadres or members of neighboring households. The rank order
between the two sets of roles—the nakawanehetik and b'alnialetik—de-
pends on relative age; thus the older nakawanehetik have greater author-
ity.

Familial roles provide both a pattern and a springboard for other roles 621
in the community. The father-son role pair is extended to the relationships 593
between senior and junior officials in both the religious hierarchy and the 561
curing hierarchy. For each saint, the elder mayordomo is called "father" 784
(*Tatil Martoma*), and the younger is called "son" (*Nič'nal Martoma*). A 192
man must fill the junior post at least two times before taking on the senior
post. For each side of the dual division, the elder curer (when there was a [756]
recognized leader) was called "father" (*Tatil ?u?ul*), and the younger
was called "son" (*Nič'nal ?u?ul*) or sometimes "youth" (*Biḳtal ?u?ul*).
The term *me?il* (woman who has borne a child) is used in the reference 621
to ceremonial roles played by women in the household, as in the case of 592
me?il k'op (woman speaker) and me?il č'om (mother of the betrothal). 562

• 621
593 Familial role requirements must be fulfilled in order for public roles to be
581 undertaken. A man must be married in order to enter into even the lowest
794 posts in the civil and religious hierarchies.

794 Only in the case of the alfereces has wealth ever been a criterion for recruitment.
556 These four officials had to be able to spend 3,000 pesos during
434 their year in office. The heavy expenditures failed to give prestige to the
554 official, and the display of wealth excited envy rather than respect. The result was that people called upon to accept the post had to be imprisoned before they would accept.

554 Recruitment to roles in almost all institutional contexts is based on innate
756 qualities; special skills and knowledge are attributes acquired in office or other role positions rather than requirements for undertaking roles. Curers are recruited because they are recognized as having an animal spirit; they learn whatever skills are required after they have been initiated into the profession. The curers' special position in the society rests
[298] more on esoteric powers than on esoteric knowledge. Everyone in the community knows the herbs and medicines which are prescribed, and most men can give as comprehensive a taxonomy of illnesses as any practicing curer.

868 Economic roles, though largely undifferentiated for each sex, are consciously
241 learned and transmitted. Boys accompany their fathers or elder
[857] brothers to the field at about the age of eight and continue working with
[883] them until they reach independence. Observation of behavior alone would seem to indicate an unconscious absorption of the role of agricultural worker, but informants recount episodes in which training in field work was explicitly transmitted by their fathers or brothers, and formal approval of their ability to do the tasks announced to their mothers. Parents
[871] express fear that school attendance not only interferes with working in the milpa, but that it will cause the child to forget what he has learned in the field. Regardless of what other tasks a man performs, he thinks of himself as a farmer.

868 Becoming a potter requires an even more explicit training procedure.
323 The fine linguistic segmentation of each act and movement in the schedule of pottery-making is a clue to the explicit transmission of tasks by the

554 the status. Community integration is achieved at the expense of limiting the range of roles through restricted recruitment and validating mechanisms.

621 *Alternation and linkage in office-holding.* The principle of alter-
794 nation between civil and religious posts serves to integrate these officers in
[182] a single functioning system and prevents the development of segmented groups. The alternation of offices between sides of the dual divisions helps to integrate the village by pairing or alternating them in the same office. Some roles served as links between the institutional domaines. Principales are the primary symbolic leaders of both hierarchies since they are chosen from among men who have completed service in both hierarchies. The alfereces formerly symbolized the unity of the civil and religious branches in the transfer of banners from the cabildo to the church and in other ceremonial duties.

621 The regidores and judges have remained identified with the civil au-
624 thority in Tzoʔontahal, although in other towns in the area they have be-
794 come almost exclusively identified with the religious hierarchy (Cancian
[892] 1965). The regidores were formerly involved in religious affairs during the
[184] household celebration for the installation of the new alférez. At this time they were called personaetik from the Spanish term persona, or personage.

731 Events requiring community action reveal some of the links which
756 unite officials who play roles in different institutional settings. On the oc-
178 casion of an epidemic, curers are called before the civil authority to "give
621 an account" of who is causing the witchcraft. Formerly the curers were linked to the civil hierarchy by a system of social control in which the principales, as elders, reviewed their actions in guarding the safety and health of the community. This system of checks and balance has been broken by the shift in power from the principales to the president.

794 The nakawanehetik provide the links between the household and the
621 civil and religious hierarchies. They transmit the knowledge of ritual
182 prayer and acts and officiate at the inauguration of officials. They serve as stage directors in maintaining the traditional household rituals and in ensuring continuity in public ceremonials.

Etiquette of role interaction. The complex system of stereotyped 576 behavior contained in codes of etiquette depends upon role relations. The primary rule of etiquette is to greet people appropriately. In street greetings, one demonstrates that one knows how to "take into account," or show respect to, elders and minors. To elders of the first ascending generation or above, one says, "Good morning, father (or mother)." Those of [602] one's own generation are greeted as elder brother or sister, or younger brother or sister, depending on their relative age. If the encounter is with a [608] compadre, the terms kumpare or kumare take precedence over any other relation. A respected curer is addressed as *tatinal*. Officials are greeted by [554] their titles, preceded by *mam* if they are older. Such greetings are restricted to people who live in the same division of the village. When one [621] enters the other division, it is necessary to greet only compadres or relatives who have passed over after marriage. When younger persons approach elders of prestige, they remove their hats and incline their heads to be touched.

Service of food and drink is strictly ordered by age and sex. At meal- 264 time, small children are fed separately, before or after their elders depend- 561 ing on the child's needs. When they reach the age of reason, about twelve, they are expected to await their turn. The father is served first, followed by his sons in order of age. The mother eats later with the girls.

The etiquette of ceremonial behavior is an extension and elaboration of 576 the everyday forms. Service and greetings are made in order of age and 561 rank, a procedure simplified by the fact that seating arrangements are 554 made in the same order. In house ceremonials, the eldest man sits facing inward, to the right of the door. The rest of the company sits in clockwise order from eldest to youngest on benches lining the porch. Within the house, the seating of women by age begins with the eldest woman sitting at the center post and others sitting in clockwise order.

Preferred modes of behavior in all settings for all roles are "slowness 576 and softness, expressed by a single term, *ḳ'unḳ'untiḳ*. Deference and re- [192] spect—"hearing and feeling," *-šʔawai*—should be shown in all encounters, marked by behavior such as downcast eyes, shawl held over the mouth, avoidance of direct eye contact, as well as verbal signs of agreement and

576 support of whatever is said—repeating the final phrase of the person conversing or injecting supportive statements such as "indeed, indeed," or "so [535] it is." In the dance of the alfereces' wives, for example, women were the model of deference, moving in a self-contained pattern before the assembled guests, with slow, tiny steps, eyes downcast, a shawl covering their heads on which they wore their husbands' ceremonial hats.

621 Through recruitment procedures, alternation and linkage in official 182 roles, and leadership validated by age and service in lower positions—principles applying to role relations in all institutions—Tzoʼontahal has remained an integrated community. There is a high degree of stereotyping in behavior from one institution to another, and norms of behavior are the [682] same for public as for private roles. However, a remarkably high homicide [578] rate and open conflict in all of the institutional settings indicate basic sources of disruption.

682 Since 1960 the rate of homicide in town has increased from an average 593 of 1 every 2 years to an average of 5 or 6 per year. Table 29[1] indicates the 609 role relationships of killer to victim in 37 of over 70 homicides occurring 428 between 1937 and 1964. The highest incidence of homicide (7 cases) occurred between brothers and brothers-in-law. 578 Male siblings comprise the closest cooperating group. Brothers work together in the milpa until the father dies or divides his property among his children during his lifetime. Bilateral inheritance with equal division of land and houses among female as well as male offspring means that brothers-in-law are potential competitors for the same limited resources. Friction arising among brothers and brothers-in-law does not come from the principle of equal inheritance, but rather because of the fact of differing responsibilities and expenses within the family. For example, the child who has remained with the parents and [888] thus assumes the burden of care for them in their declining years often feels that he should inherit a greater share. The disputes arise in the decisions concerning how much this disadvantage should be weighted. The 682 suppression of overt competition may in part explain the homicidal acts. 683 Although the tensions in fact stem from suppressed economic competition, [154] they are translated into witchcraft accusations as soon as anyone in the [626] family becomes ill. Violence against a witch is condoned by the community and provides a channel for latent hostility. Once the accusation has

[1] (see pp.245-247..Analyst)

been made, there is no recourse but to kill the man since he may retaliate 682 683
by killing his accuser (this occurred in two of the cases noted in Table
29).

Conflict between generations in the role sets father/son and father/son- 593
in-law stems from delay in carrying out role responsibilities. Fathers are 606
expected to provide the money for the costs of betrothal, and to give their 578
children shares of the patrimony including both land and livestock. The [584] [425]
scheduling of when this should occur is often a matter of dispute, result-
ing in at least two cases of homicide in the period analyzed.

New economic enterprises have exacerbated the tensions rising from 152
envy. Foster (1965) has suggested that envy stems from the notion of the 156
"limited good," requiring the strategy of a "zero sum game" (Bennet 178
1966). The fact that the new wealth is evidence of new opportunities, not 556
a subtraction from a given resource supply, has not entered the cognitive 754
awareness of the people. The prospering leaders of these enterprises feel
themselves to be particularly vulnerable to the envy of others and thus to
the charge of witchcraft. There have been several open attacks on new [474]
leaders accused as witches; the leader of the truck cooperative, for exam-
ple, was murdered in 1966. Six men have been killed as cattle thieves in [685]
the past ten years.

The economic roles created with the introduction of new enterprises 177
have not been integrated in the traditional pattern of recruitment and con- 178
trol. In the association of cattle breeders, leadership tends to be based on 554
the size of the herd; in the case of the truck cooperative, amount of capital 621
invested and entrepreneurial skills have determined the leadership of the
enterprise, while driving skill and ability to get along in the Ladino world
has been the basis for choice of drivers. Such achievement principles as the
basis for recruitment into these envied positions are not accepted in the
same way that age and passage through a hierarchy of posts validated
higher positions in the old hierarchies. The conspicuous expenditure of [556]
wealth in the more expensive posts in the religious hierarchy has also [794]
failed to lessen hostility aroused by the increasing disparity in wealth, and [754]
in fact those who have served as alférez have been even more subject to
witchcraft aroused by envy.

"gift of the gods," liquor, to the party whose interests have been slighted. 626 273
This is done in the case of a suitor who is asking for a woman of the 431
other side of the dual division; he gives the bachelors of that side a gar- [584]
rafón of liquor in compensation for the loss of a potential mate. Liquor [621]
has become a substitute for the sacrifice of a child by a man being initiated [756]
into the curing profession. Informal offerings of liquor may be made be- [782]
tween neighbors or relatives who have been fighting with each other. Liq- [627]
uor is a kind of universal social solvent in disputes, and figures impor- [692]
tantly in court cases which are always terminated in a drinking session. [578]

Another technique is simply a payment in money to compensate for 626
damages. In some homicide cases, the payment of "blood money" has com- 682
pensated the family of the victim to avoid legal action. This is never done, [754]
however, if the community agrees that the victim was a witch. Payment of fines in court is another such form of compensation. These payments or offerings minimize the bloodshed or personal involvement in conflictual relations. Payment by the man judged guilty will ensure his reincorporation into his customary place in the community without stigma.

While it is impossible to elicit from informants a theory of roles, 554
it is possible to formulate the principles underlying roles. These are 12
deduced from behavioral observations and from evaluations made of
the performances of others. They can be summarized in the following 554
propositions: 156

1. There is a clear separation between role and role-bearer. This is seen most clearly in the passage through civil and religious offices with a minimum of "halo" effect. It is also found in the situation of household officials whose authority in directing affairs within a household
ceases when the ceremony in which they officiate is over. The separation [621]
ensures flexibility in a closed social system, enabling people to shift from [182]
one role to another. It also permits continuity in a system which requires an almost complete turnover of personnel each year.

2. Function performed is separate from role in which it is per- 554
formed. This applies even in those roles which are designated on the basis of the most important function required of the performer, for example woman speaker, liquor measurer, and basket carrier. All of

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

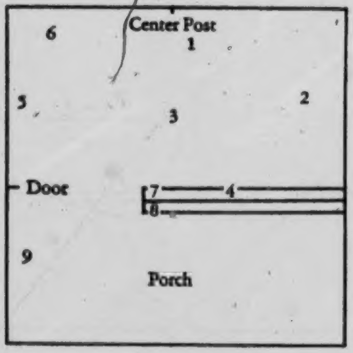
156
273
276
621
554
178

Unorthodox behavior after drinking is less subject to censure than that indulged in without this stimulus.

The social changes affecting the community have not changed the categories of roles. What has happened is a shift in the power and authority associated with civil roles: the president's role for example has assumed importance over that of the principales. A full account of the changes in the role system requires a discussion of the settings in which they are enacted, the timing which gives them coherence, and the beliefs which give them meaning. Summary statements on role coordination will be given in the final chapter.

342 women sit inside in a semicircle. A house without a closed-in porch is referred
[196] to as a "cattle house" since it is considered inadequate for entertaining
[621] guests at ceremonial affairs. Townspeople prefer to choose as higher
[574] officials those who have houses with porches to accommodate visitors.

Fig. 8. Interior of a House



1. Seat of honor for women
2. Bed area for women of house
3. Hearth
4. Bench area for relatives of house
5. Bench area for visiting men
6. Mats or wooden board for visiting women
7. Honor seat for men (when inside house)
8. Honor seat for men outside house
9. Resting areas for male helpers

592 Each member of the household has his place for sleeping, eating, and sitting.
[513] The youngest child sleeps with his parents, and older children sleep
with siblings of the same sex or with their grandparents. Newly married
couples living with their parents prefer to sleep in the cook shack if there
[264] is a separate structure. At mealtime, men and boys sit on small wooden
[352] chairs at a miniature table placed against the wall separating the interior
from the porch, while women and girls kneel on straw mats near the
hearth.

342 Reference points inside the house (Fig. 8) are the center post where the
352
562
574
796

342 party to go to the spring, at least one relative remains in the house to
796 greet the soul if it should precede the curing party.
[584]
[755] Behavior in household rituals is described in Chapters 1, 5, and 8.
[128]

The Cabildo

344 The cabildo, called by the people of the town the "cold house,"[1] was
[196] built following the revolution of 1915, when Piñeda's revolutionary soldiers
[175] destroyed the original colonial structure. The tiles of the roof were confiscated from a finca which the Indians invaded in 1941 in an unsuccessful attempt to gain additional lands. When they were unable to maintain their hold on the land, they burned the owner's house and took the tiles to the town center where they remain as a symbol of their defiant action. They refer to this event with pride. The cabildo houses the jail, equipped with a barred wooden door, in one of its wings, and the Ejido Commission office in the other.

344 Within the cabildo, each official has his established place. The cabildo is
352 furnished with a table at which the president and síndico sit on wooden
621 chairs made in the Indian town of Chamula. Four benches lining the
554 walls on either side of the entry provide seating for the civil officials. On
576 the right side (looking out at the plaza) sit the judges in order of rank;
[693] the regidores, in similar sequence follow them. The principales, and formerly the alfereces, sit on the left side when they appear for ceremonial occasions. This spatial allocation establishes drinking and greeting order as well. Visitors can go directly from one to another in the formal greeting of a handclasp and murmured "good morning, father," or "good afternoon, father," without violating age-respect patterns.

344 During court cases, the claimant and his supporters sit on the bench to
352 the left of the door; on other occasions the bench is occupied by visitors or
695 petitioners. The police sit on one of the two benches lining the outside
[625] wall, or retire to the kitchen, a wooden slat lean-to on the left wing of the

---

[171] [1] Bunzel (1952) notes that in prayers, the cabildo in Chichicastenango is referred to, as "the cold house, the icy house." Although the Quiché term is not given in her manuscript, one can see a similarity in the rhyming couplets and metaphorical allusions in the prayers of the towns.

building. When they leave the cabildo, they take their staffs as a mark of 344 352 [illegible]
office. 625

The central room serves as a courthouse, a place for legislating and administering 344
town affairs, for performing marriages, recording births and 621 •
deaths, and for inaugurating new officials. Everyone who goes to the
courthouse has a specific purpose for being there. Regular attendance [554]
means that an established seat and place in the order of greeting and [123]
drinking is accorded—even to the anthropologist.

Each day the civil officials assemble at the town hall about eight in the
morning and take their accustomed places. Sitting is an official act. In listing [622]
the duties of the president, for example, "sitting at the table" was [293]
given first in order of importance of his functions by two informants, and
in the case of the judges, "sitting at the bench" was listed first.

The president opens official mail and dictates responses to the secretary, 62
now an Indian of the village, who pecks out the letters on an ancient [405]
portable typewriter. Since typing is a new skill for him, he makes many [177]
errors, and his retrials are accepted with patience and sometimes joking by
the president and judges. When the president has an order for the police,
it is transmitted to the regidor, who in turn passes it on to the police. The
police always carry out their orders in pairs. Interruptions occur as petitioners
enter. Men come in to announce the birth of a child and receive [553]
the name of the saint's day from the president, who consults the calendar; [691]
creditors arrive to request that a debtor be jailed for nonpayment of a loan [426]
or interest. When official visitors arrive from the I.N.I. or from the Ejido [647]
Commission, the president usually rises and stands at attention, agreeing [423]
with everything said. If it is an affair of some importance, the discussion [346]
may be continued in the schoolhouse, since the teacher has gained political [375]
importance in the town. The Indians rarely oppose departmental or federal
officials directly; when they are unwilling to comply with an order,
they stall for time, figuring that in the long run time is with them.

When the cabildo serves as a courtroom, it provides a setting for airing 695
not only the grievance which precipitated the court action, but also the entire [344]
spectrum of personal relations involved. More women than men resort [562]
to court, since the drinking customs for men mean that they are more [273]
often the violators of norms. Behavior in the courtroom is controlled by a

as lawyers. The defendant is sometimes accompanied by supporters who 693
feel that he has a case. The failure of parents to accompany a defendant, 695
regardless of his age, is attributed to their shame over their child's misbehavior [593]
and their own failure to train him properly. The judge does not
limit himself to passing judgment but also counsels the defendant as to
how he should behave.

The town hall is usually shut and locked at noon unless some business 621
requires more time. In the evening about six, the officials return to take [344]
their same posts. They sit with their arms drawn inside their woolen jackets [516]
for warmth. After a half an hour they drift home. People rely on the
presence of officials rather than particular actions to maintain social control, [626]
and it is their appearance at regular hours that assures the villagers
that the town is being well run.

Local autonomy depends primarily on retaining social control functions. 621
Civil officials try to settle disputes locally and avoid the entry of Ladino officials 692
from the departmental capital, although the judges and president 631
will threaten the defendant with taking the case to the department if they cannot get compliance. The number of cases referred to the capital has been increasing since 1950 as Table 32 shows. In 1951 the federal government began to fine local officials who failed to report homicide cases and accidental death. The local officials complied, but departmental courts were unable to bring action in over half the cases. No action was taken in 72 cases, or 54 percent, in comparison with 62 cases, or 46 percent, in which action was taken. Domestic cases, except for one of adultery, are adequately handled in local courts and do not appear in the departmental
records. The trend shows an increasing number of cases of crimes against [674]
persons in comparison to crimes against property, an index to the breakdown [182]
in social control processes.

The Church

346
The church has been built and on two occasions rebuilt—when the [794]
tower was struck by lightning—with funds collected locally from household [821]
heads. Damage to the church was attributed to the patron saint of [776]
the neighboring town of Oxchuk who, the people say, was fighting with
their patroness, Santa Lucía. The townspeople feel that they own the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 301]

The townspeople feel that they own the 346
church, and many resent the intrusion of the priest who resides sometimes 793
two or three days a week in the adjoining rectory. In the past five years, 794
however, the priest has succeeded in asserting more control over the 177
church: he has forbidden drinking in the church or in the courtyard, a 178
prohibition that resulted in an open confrontation with the leading cofrade
(Chapter 9); and he now controls the keys to the church and to the
money boxes, formerly the responsibility of the fiscal. The two lay sisters
who are in residence during the week hold the keys and are in charge of
the upkeep of the church.

People always show respect for the church by removing their hats as 346
they pass the entrance, even when they are at a distance. As they enter the 526
church, they always kneel and cross themselves. They may spit on the 788
floor of the church, for this is not a sign of disrespect. [514]

The complementarity of church and cabildo is still formally recognized 621
in ceremonial events: participants bow to the church and then to the cabildo 794
during processions. The transfer of sacred symbols from one locale 182
to the other at the time of the inauguration of civil and religious officials
ceremonially signifies the integration of civil and religious authority, despite
the growing separation in day-to-day functions in each of the domains.

The church serves as a staging platform for the images and symbolic offerings 346
to them in the annual cycle of ceremonies. During the nine days of 796
ceremony accorded to the major saints, their images are moved to the center
of the altar or to the center of the nave. The staging effects are particularly
notable during the fiesta of Holy Week, when the reenactment of the
crucifixion is performed in the nave. The mayordomos, under the direction [794]
of the fiscal and the lay sisters, move the saints about and prepare
adornments of flowers and pine needles.

The church is the locus for the weekly mass given by the priest. The [562]
men stand on the left side of the church (facing the altar), while the
women kneel or sit on the floor to the right. A few benches near the altar [563]
are occupied by the Ladinos of the area who attend the mass. The lay sisters [794]
indicate to the congregation when they should kneel and rise in response
to the cues of the sermon or mass.

In addition to these scheduled events, the church serves as a locus where 346
776
782

346
776 individuals can visit the saints on their own personal missions. Appendix 782 3A records the visits of groups and individuals on an ordinary Sunday. Their actions in the church are part of the standardized behavior incumbent upon all those who enter the building.

Communication with the saints is ensured either by touching and kissing their images or, if the images are enclosed in glass cases, by tapping the glass with offerings of money. It is believed that one gains an audience [562] by paying for it. When groups larger than individual clusters of visitors enter the church, sexual segregation is observed (for example, when a male child enters with his mother on the occasion of a mass, he remains with her until more people arrive, then leaves her to stand on the male [788] side of the nave). Ritualized wailing is done by women only. After such a [152] demonstration the women show normal composure, since wailing is a standardized mode of communication, not an outburst of uncontrolled emotion. It is private and concerns the individual wailer and the saint to which she appeals; none of the other visitors in the church indicates any sign of response to these displays. Unless there is a focused activity going [794] on, such as a mass or series of baptisms, each visiting group is an autonomous unit, carrying out its own mission.

794 People visit the church most commonly in pairs of two. They congre- 571 gate for mass in a pattern in which women and children enter first, and 562 men, who linger in the plaza until the church is partially filled, enter in clusters and take their places on the male side of the nave. The religious and civil officials enter last, and the mayordomos, whose attendance is one of the obligations of their post, move toward the altar at the front. Men attend church less frequently than do women.

THE SCHOOL

346 Unlike the church, the school is regarded as an alien structure. Assist- 621 ance in reconstruction and maintenance is given under pressure rather 875 than voluntarily. Until fairly recently, schoolteachers too remained uninte- [177] grated in the community. In the early years of the school's existence, there [178] was a rapid turnover of teachers. The employment of a schoolmaster with a wife and daughters stabilized the position after 1953. The school has be-

come the domain of the schoolmaster, who represents federal influence in 346
the local community. He has rebuilt parts of the structure in the thirteen 621
years he and his family have lived and worked in this building; it was his 875
fortress when the Indians threatened to kill him for building a chicken coop obtruding into the street, and again when he interceded in a case of homicide. He has a small arsenal stored in his bedroom in preparation for any reversal of his position in the community. The school is his platform, the area he controls and from which he shouts to his compadres—the storekeeper, the fiscal, and the president—to come speak with him.

The long building is subdivided into four classrooms and the living 346
quarters of the schoolmaster's family. The classrooms are furnished with 352
crude benches and tables; blackboards and charts of birds, animals, and 353
the alphabet decorate the walls. The back porch, converted to classrooms 872
to accommodate the three hundred and fifty children, overflows with benches. The students' own materials—a notebook, pencil, and erasers—are provided by their parents. When a notebook is filled, the students industriously erase all the marks and reuse the book until it falls apart.

When I was in the village, the schoolmaster often encouraged visitors to 621
share a Coca-Cola with him in his office. Here, surrounded by his books, 875
his collection of artifacts of both genuine and spurious origin, a picture of [346]
the district inspector of federal schools pinning a medal on his chest, the [353]
flag of the Mexican republic, he could speak freely of the personal attacks and frustrations and of the rare satisfactions he encountered "in bringing civilization to the town." As he began to build up his political power in the community, the president and síndico often consulted with him on town affairs. Agents of the federal or departmental offices who came to town frequently communicated with him directly before going to the cabildo. The school became the arena for working out political programs and strategies. The schoolmaster prided himself on being the primary channel of communication between the outside world and the village. 872

The conflict of interest between the schoolmaster and the parents of the 875
children over attendance in school has been ameliorated in recent years 578
with the acceptance by some of the parents of education as an advantage. 177
In the early years of compulsory education, physical force was used to 178
round up the children. The traumatic experience of his first day in school 872
177

876 den on the teacher already laboring with the barrier in communication.
Despite these difficulties, the children manage to learn the basics of reading,
[875] writing, arithmetic, and Spanish in four years of schooling. The
teachers are devoted and spend at least seven hours in the classroom each
day.

872 During the recess period the children play individual competitive games
524 except when organized games are introduced by one of the teachers.
There is a tendency toward ganging up on weaker individuals in fights,
that occur, but I have never seen signs of marked brutality. Since the La-
[563] dino children are a small minority in the school (there are no more than a
half a dozen among the three hundred and twenty-four students) the Indian
children do not face the discrimination found in schools with a
greater proportion of Ladinos (cf. Romney and Romney 1966).

876 Discipline is no longer as strict as it was in the early years of public education.
The teacher allows someone who has been hit to hit the aggressor
but does not herself intercede. Threat of punishment may be made by the
teacher, but I have never seen it carried out, and it is never suggested as a
solution to failure to learn.

571 In comparing the domestic, civil, and religious domains of activi-
561 ties, the following features emerge:
554 1. In each domain, a hierarchy of power is present. In the house,
[592] males take precedence over females, and older members over younger.
[562] In the cabildo, the power hierarchy takes the form of a rank order co-
[621] ordinate with age in most of the offices, while in the schoolhouse, power
is polarized with all authority vested in the schoolteacher. In the church,
[875] the conflict between the priest and the cofrades (Chapter 9) has not
[794] been resolved. Within the ranks of the mayordomos, relationships
between the elder and junior mayordomo establish a graded ranking
system (Chapter 8).

571 2. Behavior in each domain is standardized. Relative rank is re-
554 flected in seating order, greeting order, and drinking order. Autonomous
576 behavior is most marked in the domain of the church. Focused inter-
action is predominant in the school, where order and control are based
on absorbing the attention of the child in a learning task.

3. Categories of role-bearers sit and act together in all the domains. 571
In the home the me?eletik, the nakawanehetik, and the b'alnialetik have 554
established seats and act in concert. Similarly in the cabildo, four ranks 576
of officials, the principales, judges, regidores, and police, move and act
together. In the church, elder and younger mayordomos move in pairs
of two.

4. Sexual segregation is present in the home, the church, and the 562
cabildo, but is lacking in the school. This rejection of the community 871
standard for a group situation was the basis for some parents holding 177
their children out of school until coerced by the federal authorities 178
backed by the local officials.

5. Attendance in all domains involves coercion as well as voluntary action. Coercion is most marked in the school, but resistance by the parents to forced attendance and mixing of the sexes is fast wearing down in this domain. In the cabildo, the defendant is required to attend the court hearing and may even be jailed if he does not pay the fines charged against him. Coercion is covert in the home; the lack of alternative housing arrangements makes residence in the household of orientation or of procreation mandatory.

6. Sacred symbols are present in all the domains. The symbols of
the cabildo and of the school relate the community to the nation with
the national flags and the portraits of the president. The canes of [293]
office which are assumed as each official acquires office are symbols of
local authority. The universalistic symbols of the church—the saints im- 778
ages, portraits, and banners—are acquired from Catholic orthodoxy, but 177
have been encapsulated with local sentiments and beliefs. Sacred symbols 178
are treated with respect and avoidance, both in the church and the home. 788
The "holy cross" or banners are touched only with sacred embroidered
cloths binding the hands of those who carry them. Saints' images are
kissed, but as a mark of respect, not intimacy. The Mexican flag, with 186
which less awe is associated, is saluted.

Each of the domains provides a setting for the recognition and valida- 621
tion of authority figures in the community. Values which are communally 177
shared or imposed from outside are formally instilled in these settings. Ex- 178

621
177 tra-institutional supports are still lacking for the school, which is not yet
178 fully incorporated into the community framework.

621
571
177
182
554
Replication of behavior in all of the institutional domains except the school provides a measure of social integration in the community. Patterned behavior, such as the set speeches of the patˀoˀtan, the formalized drinking procedure including the blessing of the drink and the serving of it in accordance with age and authority ranking of the participants, the etiquette of greeting and leave-taking, the embrace signifying ritual guardianship, occurs in the home, the town hall, and the church. These sets of stereotyped behavior, specified according to roles, simplify the movement from one institutional setting to another and contribute to continuity in role performance by the individual. The new patterns of behavior introduced in the school—desegregation of the sexes, competition in performance, grading of achievement—are not modes of behavior which have spread. However, as the skills acquired in school assume greater importance in the community, it is likely that the socializing procedures with which they were transmitted may spread to the home.

Chapter 13

Belief and Behavior in a Changing Society

181 177 178 Continuity is the theme stressed in the rules of the game that apply to living in the square world of the community. The framework of continuity is the landscape itself with the ancestral hills and devils' caves reminding people of the moral order of the past. Repetitive behavior in rituals symbolically projects the past into the future, and behavioral schema in pottery and agricultural production reinforce the belief that all remains the same. The conditions making for change stem from the very attempts to preserve the existing equilibrium. A rising population on a limited land base using colonial techniques of cultivation is bringing about an increasing reliance on outside markets for the sale of labor and the purchase of goods. [423] [621] The ejido program which has perpetuated the system of subsistence cultivation has at the same time increased the dependency on external political influence and undermined dependency on parents. Some of the rules of strategy that have developed in response to changes coming from outside the community can no longer be justified by the beliefs that govern behavior within its boundaries. The community is now in crisis: people are losing faith in the old beliefs and have not yet developed a meaningful ideology for new strategies.

[241] [323] [464] [871] The crisis does not affect all institutions equally. It is absent in the traditional economic activities of milpa cultivation and pottery production. It is incipient in the households, especially where there are wage-workers in nonagricultural jobs. It is more apparent in the civil than in the religious sphere, and it is most manifest in the new economic activities. The school, as an externally imposed institution, generates awareness of the conflict between old beliefs and the ideology of nationalism, but until recently receptivity to these ideas has been limited. The behavior described for each in- 000

The behavior described for each institution in earlier chapters will be summarized as a mode of adjustment 128
or adaptation in relation to the beliefs that give it meaning and purpose.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES 868

Learning agricultural tasks and pottery-making in the household is part 241
of adjusting to membership in the community. Parents are responsible for 323
teaching the value of industriousness and are held accountable throughout
the life of the child. Agricultural tasks are scheduled in a yearly cycle that 241
provides sufficient flexibility for a man to carry out community and familial 177
ceremonial responsibilities. In milpa agriculture, there is no specialization 178
of tasks. Small-plot agricultural production with a simple technology 423
has been reinforced by the land reform program. Since the lands incorporated 621
under the Ejido Commission in the 1930s were attached to the community,
agriculturalists were not forced to adjust to new ecological conditions.
Politicalization was minimal since the local commission operated
within the old civil hierarchy. In the recent expansion of ejido colonies in
hot country, Indians from the community have developed alliances with
non-Indians in asserting claims to the land. Without any preexisting civil
hierarchy, these ejidatarios have not had to adjust their activities to a given
structure of authority, but have developed independent political organizations
as an adaptation to their new environment.

Women's work in pottery is less subject to changes in techniques and organization 323
than is men's. The schema of production in simple tasks in a 177
fixed sequence makes it easier to teach girls each process and reinforces a 178
given pottery tradition. My guess would be that if wheel production were
introduced, it would liberate the creativity of each potter by freeing her of
established routines.

Pottery production is not surrounded, as is agricultural production, by 323
ceremonials. There is no god to whom one lights candles or gives offerings 241
to ensure success, although there are hazards in production, particularly at 776
the time of firing. Agricultural productivity, on the other hand, is thought [796]
to depend on the proper relation between the spirits of the heaven and of
the church with the spirits of crops.

In the new economic activities, the Indians have shown both adjustive 177
178
233
312
476
621

233
177 and adaptive responses. With the expansion of cattle raising, Indians have
178 organized associations adjusted to the traditional dual division. The association
621 for each side of the dual division mobilizes labor for maintaining
476 the watering holes. The failure to organize communal corrals means that
312 inefficient herding techniques, damage to the milpa, and frequent loss or
[685] theft of cattle persist. The association reacts to the last problem by hiring
killers to get rid of those suspected of theft, but this adaptive response is
limited to dealing with particular incidents and has not solved the problem.

548 The manufacturers of contraband liquor have succeeded in organizing a
273 syndicate strong enough to maintain a monopoly price for both the internal
177 and external markets and to provide security for themselves against
178 federal agents. The syndicate mobilizes for specific actions, such as raising
[435] the bail bond for imprisoned members or punishing informers. As a community-wide
[594] [681] organization ignoring the dual division and age-ranked seniority,
[621] it represents an adaptation in response to extra-community pressures.
[561]

The cooperatives that have been organized to manage the local store
474 and the trucks provide permanent managerial operations that are an adaptition
177 to growing interaction in extra-community economic activities.
178 Cooperative owners are able to raise the capital to maintain and expand
these operations. It is within these structures that entrepreneurial skills are
being developed. The organizers gain the advantage not only of socializing
the risk of loss but also of making a profit in a community where belief
in witchcraft, fostered by envy, is rampant.

474 Activities in the new economic enterprises are not supported by any supernatural
472 belief. In order to gain acceptance for the new enterprises, the
177 entrepreneur Santos, who had organized the trucking cooperative, recognized
178 the need for an ideology. His rhetoric drew upon the sense of deprivation
Indians feel in their relations with Ladinos. He justified his own
ends as an attempt to gain for all the community the profits that only Ladinos
had been able to gain through trucking and crops resales in the regional
markets. The ideology he had begun to formulate stressed economic
and political independence from both the Ladino entrepreneurs of
neighboring towns and government agents who tried to promote welfare

programs in the interest of "civilizing" the Indians. This formulation in- 474
volved a basic contradiction between the goal of moving into regional and 472
national networks and that of keeping the old autonomy and independ- 177
ence of the corporate community. He never had to face that contradiction. 178
Unable to gain adherents other than the small group of profit-sharers in
the cooperative he organized, he was killed by opponents within the com- [682]
munity.

THE FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD

The core of the traditional culture lay in the local power hierarchies pat- 608
terned on the familial model of age-ordered paternal authority institution- 571
alized in the meʔiltatil. The meʔiltatil of the household have provided a 578
flexible institution for adjusting conflict within the kin group. Their role 182
in directing ritual performances preserves a sense of continuity in life cycle
changes.

The institutionalized authority of the elders has not been upset by the 561
trend toward residence based on nuclear families, which is an adjustment 182
to the pressure of limited space in the town center. Kinship ties are contin- 602
ually reinforced by rituals that draw together the meʔiltalil as sponsors of 608
ceremonies marking baptism, marriage, and death. This group of sponsor- 591
ing relatives has absorbed the institution of compadrazgo, adding compa- 626
dres to the network of affinally-and bilaterally-related kin. The procedures 221
for adjusting conflict among members of the household and extended fam- 578
ily networks reinforce the authority of the elders. When adjustive pro- [681]
cesses in the house and court "arrangements" and in curing ceremonies [762]
fail, the only recourse is for one of the disputants to leave the community
or commit homicide.

Ceremonies within the household provide a model for the rules of the 561
game that apply to adjustive behavior in the community. The household 182
officials introduce new officials into their role, teaching them the prayers
and directing the proceedings. Their authority depends upon age and pres-
tige acquired in office. The meʔiltatil, as the elders of the family, are the [769]
direct link with the ancestors. They and the nakawane provide the strong-
est force for preserving the ways of the ancestors.

struck by lightning on two occasions. The solution was to rebuild the 771
tower of metal so that Santo Tomás could not demolish it if he struck 776
again, a defensive reaction which is typical of the Indians in their extra-community 821
relations. When an eclipse of "Our Grandmother the Moon" 182
occurred during my stay in town, everyone went to her assistance, banging [789]
metal tools and pots, in what was believed to be a fight with the sun.

The emphasis on self-recrimination and guilt in explaining failure minimizes 156
the build-up of protest. Economic hardship attributed to a man's 771
own improvidence in relation to his fellow man and God are accepted as 755
his lot in life. The drama of the curing ritual projects the Indians' sense of 182
their own guilt for the suffering and poverty they endure.

POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

The structure of the civil hierarchy has been maintained but organizational 621
changes have occurred which have weakened the basis for it. The 794
alternation of offices between church and civil positions survives in the 177
lower levels, but the new leaders in civil affairs now begin in the Ejido 178
Commission, and few of those who pass as president take on posts in the
religious hierarchy. The appearance of continuity has been maintained in
communal rituals in which the principales provide the link with the past
and the alfereces, until 1966, were the link between civil and religious
wings; but in the day-to-day running of the town, the officials do not act
on these premises. The balance between officials from each side of the dual
division has been upset by the population increase on one side. The abolition
of the institution of alfereces gives public recognition to the growing
awareness of imbalance. Moreover, the factions based on the new trucking
cooperatives that cut across the dual division reduce the effectiveness of the
dual division in channeling conflict.

Behavioral deviation from the norms is present in all societies and is not 621
in itself an index to structural change. This comes about when new interpretations 578
are given to events that undermine confidence in existing institutions 177
and leaders. Political conflicts in the past were interpreted as a 178
contest between members of the sides of the dual division and hostility

621
578 was channeled along existing lines of competition. During my stay in the
177 community from 1964 to 1966, most conflicts were attributed to economic
178 competition between the two trucking cooperatives. Along with this, the
[114] waning of the position of the principales has undermined the confidence
[474] of the people in the system of checks and balances in which the principales
[182] watched over the judges, the judges watched over the curers, the curers
watched over the people to see that no one brought in evil, and the ancestors
[756] watched over everyone. Curers are more and more often accused of
witchcraft and are frequent victims of homicide. The sense that they are
the guardians of the pueblo and the agents of the ancestors is nearly dead.
They are consulted only because the people feel that, because of the evil in
them, they can fight the evil caused by others.

621 The shift in power from the old leaders to the new has not been accompanied
756 by a shift in ideological allegiance. The new leaders cannot offer
177 the security the people felt when they were living in the eyes of the ancestors.
178 The curers remain as a powerful group because of their claims of
being able to fight evil, but there is no longer a legitimate authority controlling
their use of destructive forces.

561 A system of authority based on rule by elders is a structural correlative
554 of a behavior pattern in which people act out the ways of the ancestors.
177 This applies to the schematized behavior contained in rituals and in traditional
178 productive activities. The ideology of a seniority-based prestige system
persists at the explicit level at the same time that behavioral changes
in contradiction to this are occurring.

626 Social control in a system of behavior based on what was done in the
177 past depends upon the belief that people are carrying out their lives "in
178 the eyes of the ancestors." Ritual behavior in Tzoˀontahal seems to confirm this, but in view of the waning belief in the presence of the ancestors and the loss of confidence in their agents, the curers, this behavior is a kind of social lie designed to perpetuate the old code of morality. In their everyday behavior, people no longer act on the same premises. The social lie is perpetuated because the people who enjoyed power in the old social system—the curers and the elders—do not wish to relinquish it. It will last only so long as they can find successors, and with the abolition of the recruitment through alfereces, this should not be for long.

D

172 the density of occupational refuse suggests to him that the populations were concentrated on the hill sites themselves.

During the Post Classic period the valleys of Amatenango and Aguacatenango were apparently unoccupied. This correlates with a shift in the total settlement pattern of the area, from small well defended valleys to large, more strategic positions such as the ones on the Plateau Summit of San Cristobal de las Casas.

Ethnohistory

175 Historical documents tend to confirm that the valleys of Amatenango and Aguacatenango were not occupied by any large nucleated settlements upon the arrival of the Spaniards. They do not appear in the first accounts of the Conquistadores. The earliest reference to Amatenango is 1586 and to Aguacatenango 1605, perhaps indicating that the former inhabitants were reducidos (concentrated in villages by the Spaniards) somewhat earlier. These first references occur in connection with grants of encomienda (i.e., they were tributaries of a Spanish lord, or Encomendero) (Simpson, L., 1929:1950).

175
361
621
648 Both communities were formed, as far as we can tell from the scanty evidence in the primary sources, by the Spaniards, in agreement with the policy of reducciones (concentration of population in villages) of the encomiendas initiated in the sixteenth century (Calnek, 1961, Appendix III). Each one of these settlements was formed of two separate pueblos, one incorporated within the other, which later appear in other documents as parcialidades.

175 Thus, the village of Aguacatenango was created by joining the
361 *parcialidades* of Aguacatenango and Quesaltepec, while Amatenango
621 was composed of the *parcialidades* of Amatenango and Sacatepec.
648 It is not possible at present to identify more closely the social groups that the Spaniards called *parcialidades*.

[797] It is probable that each *parcialidad* was composed of several lineages and clans, but up to the present time no one has done a comparative study of name distributions on available censuses or other similar materials, nor has any record been found, which explains the procedures used by the Dominican Friars (who controlled the *reducciones* in the area) when they reorganized
175 the populations of the territory.[1] In central Mexico the term
171 *parcialidad* refers, in the primary sources, to the four divisions
621 of Tenochtitlan, the Aztec Capital, but they also refer to the
175 *barrios* or *calpuls* (Caso, A., 1959). In Chiapas it is normally
621 used to mean the sub-divisions of *pueblos reducidos*. It is known,
648 however, that the *parcialidades* were originally separate groups of people which were independent social units. Even after the *reducciones* they kept important elements of their organization separate, including their political officers, who were responsible for complying with demands made by the Spaniards for tribute and labor. Some of the separate political functions have been re-
174 tained up to the present. It is also safe to assume that each one
621 of the *parcialidades* was an endogamous group; both Aguacatenango

---

[1] The new documents are still unavailable. They have been reported by Edward Calnek in the National Archives in Guatemala, and by Dr. Vicenta Cortez in the Madrid Archives, Spain.

174
621 and Amatenango are at present divided into two endogamous *barrios*, remnants of these *parcialidades*.

173
101 The origin myth of Aguacatenango seems to agree with the historical evidence, both indicating that the Amatenango settlement was founded somewhat earlier. According to the people of Aguacatenango their ancestors came from a place named "Bahuitz," close to the region of Oxchuc. The elders of the group chose a place about 1,000 feet lower than the present location of the town. They had to move from this place (which now is the colonia of El Puerto, where Aguacatenango owns land for cultivation) because "they were bitten by insects and disliked the climate."

They arrived at the site of their present location, and asked for permission to occupy it from the people of Amatenango, from whom they obtained the land. While they were clearing the land for their houses, some men from Amatenango arrived to ask what they were doing. "We are cutting down the trees," they answered, and thus "*¢eté*," which means "cutting down," became their name. When they finished their work they sent some men to visit the Amatenango men and they found them gathering firewood. They asked again "What are you doing?" "*H¢ob'tah*," "gathering" the other responded, and that became their name. Both villages today call themselves and each other by these names.

Linguistics

174
197 The legend summarized above seems to imply that the two villages were populated by people who could speak to each other in the same language. This is confirmed by linguistic evidence.

197 The inhabitants of both villages speak closely related dialects of the Tzeltal language, one of the two groups forming the Tzeltal-Tzotzil, which split linguistically from the parent stock of the Mayan Family around the beginning of the Classic Period of Maya Civilization (McQuown , 1959).

Lexicostatistical counts and isoglosses show that the two communities cluster together, in dialect cores of less than 500 years of separation, as against several others in the study area of the Chiapas Project of the University of Chicago. Several indices were used for the count, including degree of Spanish borrowing (McQuown, 1956; 1959). They indicate the same degree of linguistic acculturation.

191 At present Tzeltal-Spanish bilingualism is common, perhaps with the exception of elder women, although the Spanish spoken is mainly "market-Spanish" and reduced in vocabulary.

Demography

175
621
166 During the Colonial Period and the Independence both villages remained stable, being endogamous, economically self-sufficient communities with fairly restricted ranges of territorial movement; this is in contrast with the present day situation in which settlements tend to split into separate communities through local migrations (McQuown *et al*., 1959, Section 2, Part I, page 6).

175
161 A comparison of censuses available for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries suggests a high degree of demographic continuity with a slow, steady increase in population, although there is some evidence of population declines which took place in the

175
161 area as a result of recurring epidemics. It has taken 180 years for the villages to double their population while Mexico as a whole has tripled it in 144 years, from 1793 to 1937 (Simpson, W., 1937: 149).

TABLE 1

DEMOGRAPHY: POPULATION INCREASE

Year	Amatenango	Aguacatenango
1778	576	568
1958	1,337	1,034

621
166 More recently both communities have sent out some of their population to form colonias (small dependent settlements) in their rural periphery. Amatenango has formed four separate rural barrios (La Grandeza, Madronal, Yetahwitz and Patzhwitz) situated within view of the town, and two colonias (San Vicente and San Caralampio). Aguacatenango now has one colonia, called El Puerto. Most of its inhabitants are related to those of Aguacatanango; they moved down to El Puerto in the last thirty years, after the community lands had been expanded in that direction.

Political History

175
648 During Colonial times and the Independence period both villages shared the same types of relations with the outside world; these were mainly the payment of tribute in kind and services to the Spanish and Ladinò (Local Mexican) authorities.

When first mentioned, the villages appear to have been

175 under the administrative jurisdiction of the *Provincia de los*
648 *Llanos*.[1] They were, and still are, part of the same *Curato* of
[793] the local Catholic Church, which was under secular clergy, as op-
posed to most villages in the area which were under Dominican
jurisdiction. Up until 1854 they were subjected to the same
changes with respect to the administrative districts of the State
of Chiapas (districts which were rearranged practically every time
175 there was a change of government). In 1854, however, the local
●621 648 districts were reorganized into *Municipalidades* (the closest
631 English equivalent being a county); Amatenango became attached to
Teopisca, the nearest Ladino-Indian town, as a part of the ninth
Municipio, while Aguacatenango became dependent upon the fourth
Municipio of Comitan, together with the towns of San Bartolomé
(also a mixed Ladino-Indian town), Totolapa and Concordia (Trens,
1942).

631 At the present time Amatenango is an independent *Municipio*,
621 having been separated from Teopisca in 1937, while Aguacatenango
is an *Agencia* of the *Municipio* of Venustiano Carranza. Both com-
[692] munities are, however, attached to the equivalent ladino towns in
[651] similar ways because of their economic dependence, because such
disputes as are not solved within the confines of the village are
sent to the *juzados* of the towns, and because the offices of the
Tax Collectors and *Ejidos* are situated in these ladino towns.

175 669 Neither of the two communities became directly involved in
621 631 the Indian Uprisings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,

---

[1] San Bartolome de los Llanos; today known as Venustiano Carranza.

175
669 called by the historians the Wars of the Castes (Pineda, 1888;
621 Molina, C., 1934; Kline, H., 1960), and both of them voted to join
631 Mexico when the State of Chiapas was contemplating annexation to
either Mexico or Guatemala (Trens, 1942:274).

175
631
621

TABLE 2

AMATENANGO AND AGUATENANGO: POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTIONS

Time	Amatenango	Aguacatenango
1600 to 1778	Obispado de Ciudad Real Provincia de los Llanos	
1829	Departamento del Sur Partido de los Llanos	
1844	Distrito del Centro Partido de Las Casas o San Cristobal	
1854	Municipio de San Cristobal 9th Municipio	Distrito de Comitan 4th Municipio
1937-1958	Municipio de Amatenango	Municipio de V. Carranza

175
177
281 In the end of the eighteenth century (1792) the Bishop Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito tried to specialize Amatenango, Teopisca and Aguacatenango as small textile centers (cotton) by giving the weaving materials to widows and young female children to process and sell. A school for the training of weavers [874] was established in the same year, but the project ended unsuccessfully in the beginning of the nineteenth century (Trens, 1942: 175-6).

Relations with the Outside World

T 621 121 Amatenango and Aguacatenango can be considered independent societies for the purposes of describing them, in terms of their internal features. Each one can be analyzed in terms of "the entities that compose it and their interrelationships" (Redfield, 1955:19). They have their own ecological adaptations and a set of cultural norms that preserve their style of life and justify it at the ideological level. They have their own "personality" and "life history." In a sense, they are those unique wholes which Redfield defined in "The Little Community" (1955): "a small settlement of people self-contained and distinct from all other" (Redfield, 1955:113). But because this is so, a description of their general outlines of life would not be complete without indicating their place in the larger society of which they form a part.

The Indian villages of Chiapas, such as Amatenango and Aguacatenango and many others, form part of a world larger than themselves, an extremely complex one, both socially and culturally.

T 648 On the one hand, the Indian villages live within a local society which also contains settlements of Ladinos, local Mexicans who have a separate cultural tradition and social organization. On the other hand, although the Indian villages and the Ladinos' settlements are two quite distinct social types, one cannot be understood without the other.

M 563 Mexico is a multiple society, characterized by two distinct cultural traditions, each significantly different in the extent of integration. Only part of the population of the country

M
563
627 doctors and officers of the National Indian Institute (INI) who
647 arrive to the villages at irregular intervals. In Amatenango,
T
621 the INI has established a "clinic" in which a native nurse pro-
743 vides some medical services, such as vaccinations, the selling of
647 aspirin, etc., while in Aguacatenango the native INI nurse provides services in his home.

T
621 In both the villages the INI has established a cooperative
647 store which sells staples which are not produced in the community,
474 but such stores are in no sense agents of cultural change, selling only commodities which the Indians habitually buy elsewhere. (A reason for the lack of success of such stores is that the Indians have not understood the "cooperative" principle, very few men have joined, and they are disillusioned with the marginal
T
621 profit obtained through them.) In 1958, Amatenango had water
647 piped into the village, a project completed by the INI in 1957;
312 while after the author left Aguacatenango in 1958, water pipes
114 were installed there.

M
563 Political relations with the *Ladinos* of a more formal
692 nature occur through the courts of justice and national government offices, and they are characterized by the covert (and at times open) hostility and misunderstanding on the part of both Indians and *Ladinos* (see D. Metzger, 1956 and Fuente, Julio de la, 1956).

T
628 Relations with other Indian villages are common both for
438 Amatenango and Aguacatenango. They trade with the communities
571 located in different ecological zones the products that do not
608 grow in their territory (*ocote* from the highlands, sugar cane from
582 the lowlands, etc.) in exchange for their own products and they

8: Hunt E-4,5 (1958)1962 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango
Aguacatenango

CHAPTER III

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AT THE VILLAGE LEVEL

Introduction

128 For the purpose of describing the social structure of the two communities compared on this paper, they will be treated at two levels. The level of the macro-structure contains the total community and the community territorial divisions (the barrios); the micro-structural level contains the household, the descent groups, and the informal territorial groupings or neighborhoods.

[621] [184] The main justification for this division of the material is that the macro-structure of the two communities is extremely similar, and there will be very few axes of contrasting comparisons to be found at this level, while the micro-structure is the level at which the most important differences between the two communities discussed in this paper are found.

A second justification is that the definition of roles at one level is separated from the definition of roles at the other level.

128 571 The roles at the macro-structure level are role dyads which include, on the one hand, the individual in the role of a community member, and on the other, any person representing the community at large. The roles at the micro-structure level are

-8: Hunt E-4,5 (1958)1962 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango
Aguacatenango

The Social Setting of the Villages

Introduction

621
121
The villages of Aguacatenango and Amatenango can best be described as corporate peasant communities, following Eric Wolf (1955: 452-71).

First of all, the villages are small, independent social systems, with clearly defined geographic and social boundaries, "in relation to both outsiders and insiders" (Wolf, 1955:456).

The Land

621
423
In the spatial dimension, the main characteristic of the villages is that they lay claim to a territory, a land base over which they hold exclusive rights of usufruct, and which has clearly demarked geographical dimensions. The rights over this territory are communal rights, every villager being a co-owner of the community territory, in the sense that membership in the village gives to a man the rights of usufruct of land within the village boundaries.

175
172
423
[174]
We do not know what the characteristic features of the pre-hispanic land tenure system of the Tzeltal-Tzotzils were. At the beginning of the Spanish occupation of the area, the Indians were relocated in villages and assigned to a particular *encomendero* and *encomienda*. (The *encomienda* was an institution by which a Spanish lord was assigned a number of villagers from whom he had the right to collect services and tribute.) At the same time, the villages were allotted land of two kinds: municipal, administered by the town officials and used to pay taxes and tribute to

T
M

175 The rights over land given to the villages by the Spaniards
423 were not contested by the Mexican Government, but during the last
621 century there have been some redistributions of the boundaries to
better fit changes in the size of the population of the different
M villages in the area. Besides, although it was not legally approved,
[661] large chunks of the territory of the communities were
taken away by the local ranchers who had the backing of the state
T politicians. As a result of the land invasion by the ranchers,
175 423 the villages of Amatenango and Aguacatenango controlled, until
621 661 recently in this century, very little land, mostly temporal, the
523 better land being in the hands of the local ladino ranchers.
T After the Mexican Revolution of the twenties, the fincas (ranches)
175 423 were expropriated by the national government, according to new
M policies of agrarian reform, and under the presidential regime of
669 Avila Camacho were returned to the villages as Ejidos (cooperatively
423 owned land).

T The territory of the villages is divided today, by use,
621 423 into land for agriculture (?ulabal [irrigated], pomultik [hot-country]
311 and temporal), land for residential sites, and land for
lumbering and pasture. Within the communities the over-all authority
T 621 that controls land is the Ayuntamiento, the body which
423 forms the civil branch of the civil-religious government that is
the ultimate authority in village affairs. The Ayuntamiento
controls both the communal lands and the Ejido lands.

T The Ejidos function very much like the communal lands, in
423 621 that they are "owned" by the community. Every household head is
a member of the ejido cooperative, and has rights to cultivate a
parcel within the ejido. According to the Mexican Agrarian Code,

423
621 the Ejido should be administered by a Commission, the head of which is the Comisario Ejidal. In Amatenango and Aguacatenango, however, there is no distinction between the administration of the communal lands and the ejido parcels. Although there is a Comisario Ejidal, he is usually a young man whose word can be overruled by the Ayuntamiento with whom he must work in agreement, and although the position of Comisario does not count in the escalafón of the civil-religious hierarchy for seniority rights, the post has been informally assimilated into the Ayuntamiento officerships.

Through the legal assignment of a limited territory for each village, the size of the land owned by the community has been, at the moment, frozen. The community lands can neither be expanded, nor alienated from it, except under very special circumstances defined by law.

[642] Under the Mexican Agrarian Code only the State can reclaim land from the community, and only under special conditions: need to establish urban centers, means of communication, and the constructions of hydraulic works for public benefit. Of these, only the second is likely to occur at the present time in this rural, marginal area, which has no modern urban center, little water supply, and a scarcity of good land, so that the construction of a dam is not worth undertaking.

On the other hand, community lands can be expanded for cultivation in three ways:

1) Buying land from nearby fincas, which now cannot be expropriated because they are within the size limits of inalienable property (propiedad inafectable) set up by the government.

423 621 2) Extending the rights of usufruct in the already available communal lands which are still covered with timber.

3) Petitioning the Ejido Commission if there are more than twenty individuals without parcels. In this case, the Ejido Commission is responsible for providing land by seeking further expropriation of large latifundios. This, again, is not likely to occur, because the size of the surrounding private properties is smaller, now, than the maximum size permitted by law, and cannot be reclaimed. Many finqueros, in other areas, have large properties which they have managed to keep untouched by registering the land in the name of several family members with separate ownership titles, so each one is smaller than the size permitted by law (Montagu, 1960). If necessary, the government could claim that this practice is illegal. But in the valleys of Aguacatenango and Amatenango this type of finca does not exist, being common only in the more fertile lowland territories such as the area of Ocosingo.

423 628 Some communities in the Chiapas highlands have been expanding their territories by invading the lands of bordering villages, the best example of this being the Chamulas into Huistec land, north of San Cristóbal de las Casas (Pozas, 1959). But in Amatenango and Aguacatenango, although from time to time they have had conflict over the exact boundaries of their territories with other neighboring villages (Pinola, for example), this type of 423 621 expansion has not occurred. The demands for parcels by the villagers can be met from the already available land because of the

423 recent grants of land, and also because the whole region of
621 Amatenango and Aguacatenango has less population pressure than the overpopulated Chamula area.

Membership

621 In the social dimension, one of the basic features of the corporate communities of Amatenango and Aguacatenango is their criteria for membership: to become a member of Amatenango of Aguacatenango one has to be born in the village, or marry a village member.

Contractual membership, although rare, may occur, and has, but only for Indians, and with concensual acceptance by the whole
[166] community. When the nearby fincas were closed after the Mexican
[175] Revolution, some of the Indian peones attached to them asked for and obtained land from Amatenango and Aguacatenango and became full members of these communities with the same rights and duties as any other community member. Although people can indicate who is a member of a new or old family, this distinction tends to be forgotten, even by the families themselves, after the next generation has been born and married into the village.

628 A man from another Indian community may receive an agri-
621 cultural plot if he makes a petition to the Ayuntamiento, is willing
423 to pay the ejido taxes and the limosna (tax levied against the
[651] household heads to support the expenses of celebration of village holidays) and a small payment to the Ayuntamiento (20 pesos) for handling his case. Even then, he has to bring witnesses to testify

628 621 423 to his good conduct, plus demonstrate that he is not able to cultivate within the confines of his own village lands.

621 423 166 Membership in the community requires residence within its territorial boundaries. If a person moves away from the village he loses the attached rights of membership, although at his return he can claim such rights back.

621 Maintenance of membership involves clearly specified duties (e.g., paying communal taxes), and the general obligation of living and acting in agreement with the cultural norms.

Government

All the male members of the community, ideally, and most of them in practice, participate (at some time in their lives) in the government machinery of the village.

621 794 Amatenango and Aguacatenango each have two governmental bodies, the Ayuntamiento (or civil body) and the Mayordomias (or religious body). (The distinction between civil and religious is not a sharp one drawn by the community members themselves. It is an analytical device to label the different functions of these two bodies which are clearly separate and require different skills on the part of the incumbents.)

621 The Ayuntamiento deals with secular matters: it administers the land, the relations with the outside world and the village taxations, and is in charge of the maintenance of social control through the application of the native system of justice (as against, and separate from, National or State Mexican law; see Metzger, D., 1956). Among its duties are those of keeping vital statistics for

621 Among its duties are those of keeping vital statistics for
659 the National Population Bureau which are sent to the state office,
390 solving cases of adultery and theft, collecting the fiesta and
351 363 Ejido taxes, keeping the streets clean, building and repairing
491 roads and public buildings, and also taking charge of the local
492 344 jail. Ayuntamiento officers are also called in to prevent or solve
754 witchcraft cases and give advice and reprimands to misbehaving
626 wives, sons and other relatives when the household or the responsible
relatives cannot deal with the case on their own.

621
423 The Ayuntamiento also keeps its own corn field, worked by
432 communal labor, whose crop is sold to collect funds for its own
434 expenses.

794 The Mayordomia, or religious body, performs the formal activities on the religious holidays, is the custodian of the sacred objects (rockets, church keys, bells) connected with the Church, and the authority which carries out the tasks required by all of man's peaceful relations with the supernatural on the village level.

They are responsible as a group for the upkeep of the Church building and saint images, and the preparations for and the performance of Church Fiestas, regular church meetings, etc. Among their duties are those of providing meals for the priest while he is in town, helping during mass, contracting musicians and collecting the Church limosna during mass.

621 This structural level lacks monopoly of either of these functions in relation to other less inclusive social units. Social control and religious activity are carried on at the level of the barrio, the extended family, and within the household, and religious activity can be carried on by individuals.

•621
627
Many cases of adultery never go outside the fences of the sitio, and many witchcraft cases come to the Ayuntamiento only after a murder has been committed in "revenge," in which case the Ayuntamiento is only called in to re-establish order and calm down the relatives of the deceased, trying to avoid further revenge and bloodshed.

794
776
The Mayordomos, on the other hand, have no control over the household Saints which are "owned" by each family and kept in the house in a special altar, nor do they relate directly, within the Church organization, to the many supernatural beings which populate the belief system of the villagers. The "owners of the hills," spirits which inhabit the caves, rivers and wells, the mythological creatures such as the Sombrerón (frightening ghost which appears to tempt people in isolated spots) or Juan Lopez (the local culture hero), and the evil and powerful souls of witches
794 are in a separate domain. These can be controlled only by the
624
774 curanderos, who have powerful souls, or by the principales. This
776 last group (principales) is also "in charge" of taking care of the health of the village, and do so by having their own souls patrol the boundaries of the community at night and by forbidding entrance to sickness and plagues. The men capable of such supernatural performances "own" animal spirits (nahuales) which help them in their task. Mayordomos, on the contrary, can be men without such powers, and do not need to belong to the select group which deals with the supernatural outside the realms specified by the Catholic Church.

000 The communal offices of the Ayuntamiento and Mayordomías

621 The communal offices of the *Ayuntamiento*[48] and *Mayordomías*
623 form a hierarchical age-grade system, with a partially compulsory
794 sequence of *cargos* (literally burdens, although it can best be
561 translated as offices) which end in the *cargo* of *Principal*, who
is a member of the community council of elders.

561 The age-grade system does not have corporate groups of the age-set type common in East Africa. The system only places the individual in relation to others who are higher or lower than him in the hierarchy. People belonging to the same level of the hierarchy do not act as a group, nor do they develop special relations with each other.

184
621 The name and number of officerships differ everywhere in
794 the Chiapas highlands from village to village. Larger towns have a larger number of governmental posts within the hierarchy; in some towns the Church organization is more elaborate (perhaps because it was originally a *curato* head town, or had a *convento* in the village), the *Mayordomías* and *Cofradías* (religious brotherhoods which carry on some fiesta celebrations) have a larger membership, a more elaborate ritual and carry on a larger number of fiestas, while in other villages the *Mayordomías* have a secondary role with respect to the civil government. This is not the place to discuss the historical and functional reasons for this extensive variation, which would take a study in its own right, but the important thing is that although the form varies, the basic system of hierarchically graded officerships stays the same in all the Chiapas highlands, including Amatenango and Aguacatenango (see Zabala, 1961 and Figs. 2 and 3).

621
793
794

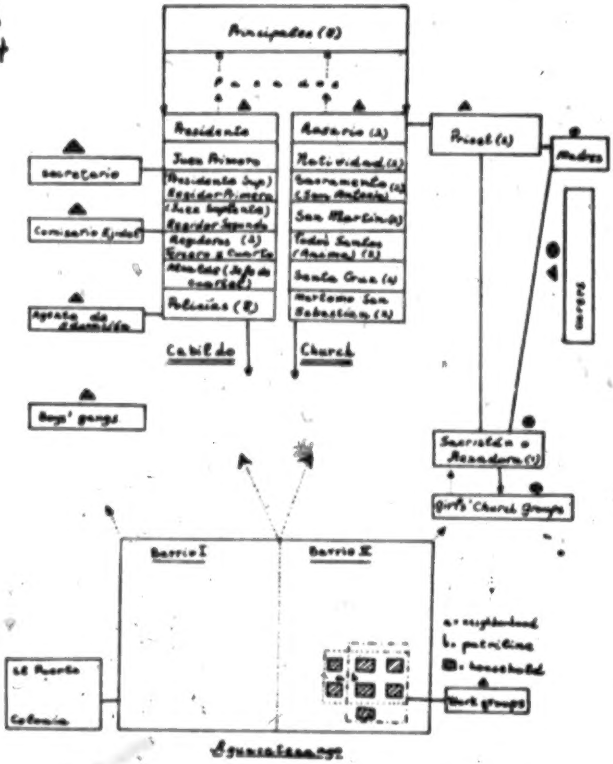

Principales (8)
Pasados
Presidente
Juez Primero
(Presidente Sup.) Regidor Primero
(Juez Suplente) Regidor Segundo
Regidores (2) Tercero y Cuarto
Alcaldes (Jefe de cuartel)
Policías (8)
Rosario (2)
Natividad (2)
Sacramento (2) (San Antonio)
San Martín (2)
Todos Santos (Animas) (2)
Santa Cruz (2)
Mayordomo San Sebastián (2)
secretario
Comisario Ejidal
Agente de
Boys' gangs
Cabildo
Church
Priest (1)
Madres
curers
Sacristán o Rezadora (?)
Girls' Church Groups
Barrio I
Barrio II
El Puerto
Colonia
a = neighborhood
b = patriline
▨ = household
Work groups
Aguacatenango

Fig. 2.--Hierarchy Structure in Aguacatenango

•621
793
794

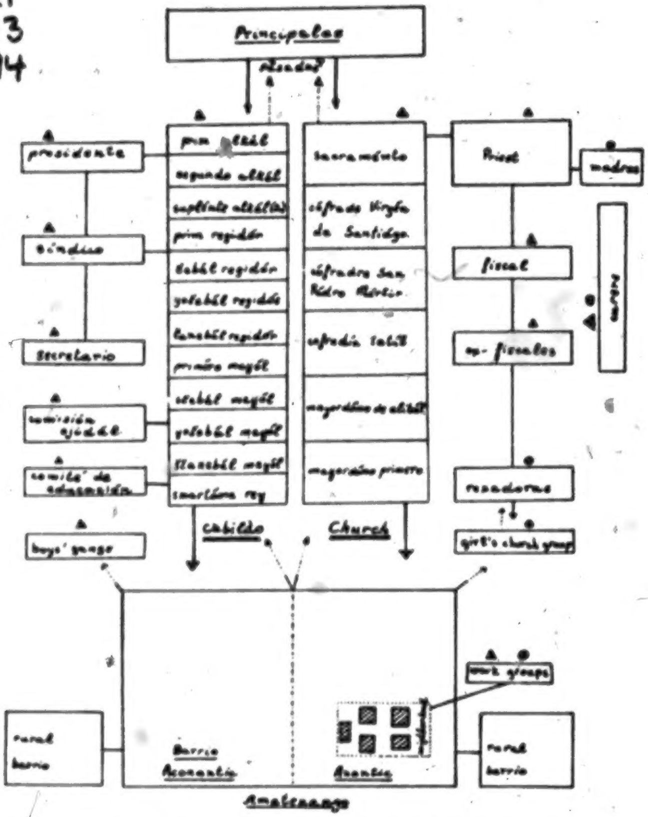

Principales
presidente
síndico
secretario
comisión ejidal
comité de educación
boys' gangs
segundo alkál
prim regidór
primero mayól
cabildo
Church
cofradía Virgen de Santiago
mayordómo de altár
mayordómo primero
Priest
madres
fiscal
ex-fiscales
rezadoras
girl's church group
work groups
rural barrio
rural barrio
Amatenango

Fig. 3.--Hierarchy Structure in Amatenango

621 The government in the communities of Aguacatenango and Amatenango is highly "democratic," meaning by this term two things: (1) The decisions of the governing officials have to be in agreement with the community desires, and it cannot take steps which contradict the written code of rules (norms) or force villagers to spend money, goods or labor outside the areas of maintenance of outside the community. In ultimate instance, the community can overrule the Ayuntamiento, replace particular officers or deny rights to the total body to carry out certain decisions which are against the will of the majority of house heads. Before any important decision is passed, the officers investigate its possible acceptance among the village men, and they would not take steps until there is a margin of security that their word or orders will be taken by them in good will. The officers' concern

[627] with the justice of their performance is quite important for them personally, because although a man enjoys immunity while he holds a cargo, he can be threatened with death at the end of his year of service. These threats are delivered by anonymous messages left at the Cabildo (House of the Ayuntamiento) door, specifying the reasons for discontent. Many a presidente municipal has been murdered for trying to introduce into his village some innovation

[954] to which the villagers were opposed. Besides direct threats, there is also the "possibility" of being bewitched while not in office.

[565] (2) The second reason why the community government can

[602] be called democratic is that there is no ruling class, as in most Mexican-Ladino towns, nor any special kinship group in charge of the town affairs. A man cannot transmit his political power to

621 his children, nor can he keep control of village affairs after his year of service has been fulfilled. Even a man occupying a post of high responsibility and prestige, a juez (judge) for example, becomes just an ordinary citizen after he leaves the office. All the men in the village theoretically, and most of them in practice, become village officers at some time in their life.

An individual starts at the bottom of the hierarchical ladder in the cargo of policía (also called mayor, topil or comisariado), which is a messenger or cleaning and errand boy for both the Mayordomos and Cabildo members. (He is the hands and feet [581] of the government.) The only requirement for this job is to be married. After this position has been "passed," a man is ready to start climbing the ladder to higher officerships, if he fulfills [521] the other requirements. He must have a child, a wife, and the [556] money which he is compelled to spend as part of the job: new clothes, liquor, and perhaps money to pay other men to help him with the agricultural work to which he cannot, being an officer, dedicate his full time.

During his life time, a man is required to pass a certain number of positions in the government, alternating Church and Ayuntamiento posts with rest periods of between one and three 62 887 888 years. After he passes the required number of officerships, and by then he would be an old man, he becomes, automatically, a pasado (a man that has passed his service), and can retire to private life, or become a principal, a member of the Elders' Council, a "father of the town." The Principales are the elder men in the village, highly respected for their wisdom and sought

62
887 after for advice in many different events, such as helping to
888 decide the divisions of an inheritance among brothers, giving advice to a drunkard husband, etc. They also have important political functions: they are called in by the Ayuntamiento to help solve the difficult witchcraft cases, and they have to approve the nominations of officers before they are presented to the community as candidates.
[754]

621
554 In selecting new officers, age, marital status, seniority rights and previous experience are considered important. The higher a position in the hierarchy, the more respected it is and the more authority and responsibility it carries. While the lower positions can be filled by any man, the higher ones require certain personal skills that not everybody possesses, so it becomes more difficult to find the right man for the job. Some men fail in commanding the respect of their fellow citizens (because they drink, or they fight with their neighbors, or similar breaches of behavior for which they are not selected for cargo), or they become senile, or die before they become pasados, so not every man arrives at the ideal and most reputable role of Principal, which is the top role a man can achieve at the community level.
[555]
[624]

621
624
554 To be a principal a man has to be able to get along with his kinsmen and neighbors, he should not be suspected of witchcraft, he should be able to deal with outsiders to the community avoiding conflict with them, he should be fast in judging the behavior of others and solving problems, and his word has to be precise and carry the necessary weight to convince others that his opinions are sound (un hombre que "sabe hablar"). Moreover, He can more easily

621 624 554 596 Moreover, he can more easily 54 fulfill these requisites if he had been able in his lifetime to become the jural head of a large and united extended family, because, given the fact that he should be able to control the opinions and actions of many villagers, it is his personal power with other individuals which supports his position as principal, and not the reverse.

621 [623] Town officials, although they are selected by the previous officers and approved by the principales, have to be ratified in their positions by all the household heads in a public meeting. The different qualifications of some men for the higher posts creates some disparity in the number of cargos held by a particular individual, but the differences are never enough to say that political power is differentially distributed. The following table and figure show the distribution of officerships by age group, in a random sample of married men in Aguacatenango, and it confirms the idea that the villagers themselves have about their access to political officership: any normal, married man with more than one child is capable of achieving, in a hierarchical order, several political posts.[1]

---

[184] [1] This system is in contrast with other villages in the area. In the very large communities with paraje type settlements (a nucleated village which functions as a ceremonial and political center surrounded by dispersed hamlets) such as Tenejapa or Zinacantan, although the number of offices is tremendously increased, the population is so large that only a few men from each paraje pass the cargos, and the ideal of every man participating in the hierarchy of power is never attained. In those cases, only the richer obtain office, and the "democratic" aspects of the system are less noticeable. It could be that an egalitarian political organization can only be maintained when the population size is limited, and that a large social group with a centralized organization "needs" differential power distribution, or, rather, cannot avoid the differential distribution of political power among the population groups.

8: Hunt E-4,5 (1958)1962 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango
Aguacatenango

TABLE 3

AGUACATENANGO: DISTRIBUTION OF CARGOS HELD BY MEN IN EACH AGE GROUP

• 621
561

Age Group	Number of Cargos Held									Statistics	
	-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	$\bar{x}$	s
20-30	8	4	6	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	0.9	0.901
31-40	1	. .	17	5	1	. .	. .	. .	. .	2.2	0.228
41-50	. .	. .	1	4	3	1	1	. .	1	4.1	1.700
51-60	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	2	. .	1	2	6.6	1.517
60 and up	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	1	. .	2	1	6.8	1.260
Sample: 62	9	4	24	9	4	4	1	3	4		

621

Mechanisms to Preserve Community "Corporateness"

One can say then, that in broad terms, political power is distributed among the households of the village in an egalitarian fashion. The tendency towards internal egalitarianism is also present in the total economic organization of the two communities of Amatenango and Aguacatenango. Egalitarianism in the economic and political realms, united with the fact that community norms are to be kept by every village member without discrimination, tends to make the community as a whole an egalitarian, homogeneous society. Homogeneity is preserved by the villagers themselves, who are very interested in keeping the status quo, because the interdependence of the villagers, the lack of specific powers given to individuals to create economic differentiation and/or political factions keeps the village united as a corporation with respect to

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 57]

• 621
561

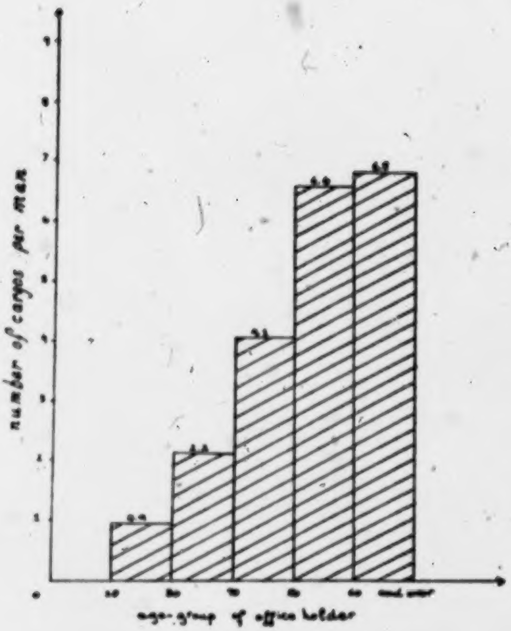


Fig. 4.--Aguacatenango: Distribution of *Cargos* by Age Group (Arithmetic Means).

621 the outside world, from which, from the community point of view, come the threats to the individual Indian, his family and to the village as a unit.

The mechanisms employed for the preservation of the village as an Indian corporate community are the wealth leveling devices and the sanctioning system described below.

556 **Economic Mechanisms**

The villagers aim at a better subsistence level, but not at capital reinvestment, and wealth does not command prestige in [433] itself. Extreme wealth differences are not likely to occur because, on the one hand, the marginality of land limits the productive power of the villager, and the low level technology: machete, digging stick, and wooden plow (the last only used in the 621 flat bottom land) limits production and also capital increase. On 423 the other hand, accumulation of land is limited by the Ayuntamiento having control of the ultimate disposal of free land within the community. Therefore, although there is some variation in the amount or variety of land held by a family, for the community as a whole there is a clear tendency toward an equalitarian distribution of parcels, so that in gross terms every household head controls agricultural plots of similar size and quality to every other agriculturalist. (Each household controls land both in cold and hot country, both irrigated and temporal and of equivalent quality.) It is difficult to ascertain the size of each 423 433 particular holding because the people do not think in terms of the size of the parcel itself, but in terms of the amount of grain

423 433 necessary to plant it. In some land more seed is necessary, so a tablón, a measure of how much seed is planted in a parcel, tends to be about a hectare, but can also be irregular in shape or somewhat larger or smaller.

434 Ideological and Sanctioning Mechanisms

Even if a domestic group manages to accumulate profits from the extra work of its members, the forced assumption of *fiesta* obligations and *cargos* (Officerships) inhibits capital accumulation and redistributes the profits back into the community in the form of consumable goods: food, alcohol, *cohetes*, etc. 621 556 The assumption of the *cargos* requires a certain amount of capital to spend on the expenses attached to the post, so it is likely that a household head who has managed to save some extra money is going to be called to perform his duties as an officer rather than the other men with less wealth and equal qualifications.

621 In terms of economic and political bases for differentiation, then, the communities are egalitarian. Villagers insist that everybody is just like everybody else: "we are all equal, we all follow the customs, we are all poor, we are all agriculturalists, 621 183 we are all Indians, just the same," they say. Nevertheless, they would also admit that some people are good and some "have bad hearts," and therefore would not follow the customs, or would try to become richer by getting involved in economic enterprises which are not Indian (such as buying or selling for high profit, or lending money, or becoming store clerks). They would imitate the *Ladinos* in their speech, dress or their house layout, become "*alzados*"

621 183 (prideful and authoritarian with equals) and commit other misdemeanors against the village norms.

621 156 Individuals as well as families can be accused of having a "bad heart" or "small heart." In a sense, any social deviant (even a person who possesses peculiar physical characteristics) can be accused of having a "small heart," and, therefore, of being a witch if he abuses his political power while in office, or gets involved in deals with Ladinos, or refuses to spend his capital in community enterprises (not only by refusing cargos, but even if he insists on not paying a limosna).

627 754 If an individual is considered a witch, the villagers can try to get rid of him by bewitching him in exchange, and this failing (witches, they think, are difficult to attack because they have powerful souls), can be "condemned" to death. Murders which are witchcraft "revenge" cases occur regularly in the communities. Vengeance against witchcraft is a community affair. If a man develops a reputation as a witch, he knows he cannot count on the support of anybody. Fear and hatred isolate him and his family. He knows that he can be killed, and has to do everything possible to counter-attack the slow but certain build-up of village antagonism which will end in his death, at the most propitious occasion.

The usual procedure in eliminating a witch is for several men, usually those who for particular reasons (such as several recent deaths in their households) feel that they have been personally attacked by the witch, to agree on killing him. This is done in secret, but even then they try to insure, by subtle

626
754
784 Therefore, the threat of supernatural sanction is powerful as a communal weapon against social deviation.

621 We can see, then, that the structural dynamics of village life are composed of opposing forces. On the one hand, there is a tendency toward egalitarianism which is expressed in the formal organization of political power and the economic life of the village as a unit. On the other hand, there is a tendency toward deviation from the economic norms which is repressed and expressed in the belief system and the sanctioning of deviants. (Obviously, if people would not tend to deviate from the egalitarian norm, witchcraft "specialization" would not be necessary!)

121 There is no society in the world which does not possess
criteria for social differentiation. Some criteria are, by
nature, universal: the basic biological differences between per-
sons (age, sex) or psychological skills (intelligence, mental de-
ficiency). Some other criteria are culturally determined (age-
grade, class, wealth and so on). Even among societies in which
the life conditions preclude social stratification, such as the
Sirionó, some few cultural criteria of individual social differen-
621 tiation are always present. When I suggest that Amatenango and
571 Aguacatenango tend to be communities which reinforce homogeneity
at the economic, political, and cultural levels, I am far from
[576] indicating that individuals are not evaluated differentially. In
every social situation, even meeting on the street, Amatenangueros
and Aguacatecos make social distinctions and determine their
relative position with respect to each other: one would call a

•621
571 man bankil (respect term, "elder brother") the other would be his
576 kiht'zin ("younger brother").

621 Older men are socially superior to younger ones. A man
561 who has passed many cargos has more authority than one who has not
554 served in the community government. A man with many children in
a united family commands more respect than a man whose children
are embarrassed of him because he is a trouble-maker. A good
562 talker is better thought of than a boring drunkard. The same dif-
561 ferentiation scale, although using some other criteria, also func-
626 tions for women. Elder ladies have enough social status to be
permitted to laugh in public while young married wives are expected to keep quiet. A woman known as a "good mother-in-law" collects the rewards of praise of other women. A wife who keeps her husband clean and well fed can visit around and be well received, while a lazy housekeeper would not be welcomed in other women's houses who fear of being judged "by the company they keep."

554 A constellation of factors, therefore, places the indi-
555 vidual in a very particular status position, and his personal
156 skill can increase his prestige or destroy it. Moreover, the
621 total performance of an individual in the totality of his roles
571 can not only increase his general status and gain the approval of
his fellow men, but would be an important factor in saving him from witchcraft accusations. A man can try to control as much labor and capital as possible in order to maximize profits from his work and minimize its consumption, as long as he does not create enemies, and insures his prestige in as many dimensions as possible: he can give advice to conflicting parties rather than

156
621 getting involved in the fight. He can help relatives in distress
571
[426] pay a debt or give a curing ceremony for a sick child. He can be
[755] a "hard worker, ready to offer a hand to a neighbor in need of
[476] extra labor" (*hel-K'abal*). He can send his wife with small pres-
[431] ents of food to other households. He can make many *compadres*
[608] among those whom he suspects of possibly being against him, thereby assuring their friendship and respect. In sum, he can create around himself a long chain of loyal villagers who are bound to him by many different obligations. Then, because he is a *'leKil winiK'* (one that behaves well with the people), he can "afford" to become rich by local standards without the immediate fear of punishment.

Every household head manipulates his environment in these terms. People try to accumulate riches and protect their paths in other ways. They also try to avoid distributing their accumulated wealth outside their household and to prevent the envy or gossip of those not so bound by loyalty, by hiding from others the knowledge of their possessions.

The result of the contradiction between the egalitarian values on the one hand, and the individual aspirations and behavior on the other, is expressed in gossip, "witchcraft talk" and a constant realignment of loyalties among villagers. Every man suspects another of being better off than one is led to believe, while at the same time he himself tries to keep others from suspecting him, and would not voluntarily give information on how many horses he owns or how much corn he has grown.

The picture of life in Amatenango and Aguacatenango is

156 62 754 777 The picture of life in Amatenango and Aguacatenango is not, however, from the ideological point of view of the community members, spread only into sanctions of negative dimensions. There are some justifications for wealth or success which are as intimate a part of the world view of the villagers as witchcraft is, because witchcraft has a positive counterpart: suerte (luck).

777 Suerte, as witchcraft power, is also a supernatural power given to the particular individual without the person's will having control over its possession. Some people are born with good suerte, some people with bad suerte. Some people can be "given" a particular suerte by a supernatural being[1] at some time in their life to keep until his death or for some period of time. Of course, a man cannot give his suerte away or transmit it to his children. The suerte is not a general power, but has specific dimensions. For example, a man has suerte to raise cattle, which would, then, grow and reproduce tremendously in his lifetime. But, he may very well have bad bean crops. His children, at his death,

---

[1] The suerte can be given by many different supernatural
[776] beings. Some informants say it is Dios (God), or the Virgin Mary, some say it is the Sombrerón, or owner of the deer and caves, to whom one has to promise to give one's soul at death, some others indicate that it is written in one's destiny at birth to have a particular type of suerte. The variations in the belief are many, and in a system of ideology without a Church body to create, and control the diffusion of dogma, this is to be expected.

[779] The only organized dogma available to the villager is the
local Catholic Church, but this dogma leaves out a series of beliefs
[538] such as suerte and brujeria as unacceptable. Therefore, these beliefs are only transmitted informally, together with folk-tales, myths and the like. Because dreams are of great importance in re-
[787] lation to these beliefs, each individual can contribute, through his personal dream experiences, to the general pool of ideology of
[771] the community. Therefore, tales and myth, dream experiences, the "true" stories that people are told in the evening by particular relatives or friends, all tend to produce a mushrooming of alternative versions of the same or similar sets of beliefs.

156
754
777
[609] accused of having an evil supernatural spirit. (A consequence of this is that recent immigrants to the village, not well known by the community at large, or solitary characters that keep to themselves, are more likely to be thought of as witches even if they do not break community norms.)

● 621

The Macro-Structure: Barrios

Amatenango and Aguacatenango are both divided into two barrios which are territorial divisions separated by an imaginary line that cuts across the villages through their central plazas. The barrios of Amatenango are called Aconantik and Anmtik (Upper and Lower) while the Aguacatenango barrios have Saint's names.

[171] This dual barrio division is common to many Indian settlements in the Tzeltal-Tzotzil region of the highlands of Chiapas, as opposed to the multiple barrio system of the mixed Indian and Ladino towns.

In the community of Oxchuc, the barrios (kalpuletik) function, according to Siverts (1960), as non-exogamous moieties with important political and ritual functions. In the opinion of this author, these barrios are just pseudo-moieties (Murdock, 1949; 47) not being based on rules of descent, but cutting across the lineage, sib and phratry units to which Oxchuqueros belong (Guiteras Holmes, C. 1952; Villa Rojas, 1945). This definition as pseudo-moieties holds true for the barrios of both Amatenango and Aguacatenango. They are not directly connected with any descent groups, but are territorial units with functions similar to those of real moieties.

621 Although the barrio lines are imaginary, they are effective limits for interaction between the inhabitants of the two sections.

621 The barrios are ideally, and in practice, endogamous.
582 (Eighty-three per cent of marriages contracted in Amatenango are barrio endogamous marriages, and 86 per cent of Aguacatenango couples have spouses from the same barrio.) The distribution of Inter- and Intra-Barrio marriages is shown in the following table:

TABLE 4

INTER- AND INTRA-BARRIO MARRIAGES

	Amatenango %	Aguacatenango %
Spouse from the same barrio	83	86
Spouse from other barrio	7.5	8
Spouse from other rural settlements	9.5	6

Given the fact that barrios originated from the parcialidades, which were at the time of the reducciones independent communities, it is possible to assume that the endogamy rules are as old as the establishment of the villages.

621 The latent hostility between the barrios becomes evident
578 when the endogamy rules are broken. Young men trying to flirt
582 with girls of the opposite barrio are reported to be beaten up,
[114] and although most informants insist that this custom is a "thing of the past," the Metzgers' field notes (Metzger, 1956-58) on Aguacatenango recorded two contemporary cases. Sometimes an offering of liquor to the single men of the opposite barrio will help

621 578 them to "overlook" the trespasser, but not many young men are
582 willing to risk the ire of the other *barrio* bachelors, nor the
gossip and sanctions applied to them by their own *barrio* mates.[1]

621 Each *barrio* plays a role in the political and religious
794 organization of the village by sending an approximately equal
number of officers to the *Ayuntamiento* and the *Mayordomías*. Although in some years there are more delegates from one *barrio*,
they attempt to correct the imbalance in the succeeding years.
[623] The *Principales* (council of elders) have also equal representation.

621 *Escuadrilla* groups (adolescent boys' gangs) and unmarried
[573] [575] women's Church groups are formed among *barrio* mates. Women, with
[312] few exceptions, used the water wells or pipe lines in their
barrio of residence (the exceptions include women who originally
came from the other *barrio*) and who do their washing at places in
[476] the river on their *barrio* side. Men who work together at such
tasks as buying and butchering a cow, building a path or clearing
an irrigation ditch belong to the same *barrio*. House parties
[527] [123] organized to buy candles for the Church before a special Saint's
day are *barrio* affairs, and no resident of the other *barrio* (with
[575] the exception of the anthropologist) is invited. In the past,
there were, in Aguacatenango, religious sororities sponsored by the
Catholic Church, and each *barrio* had a separate one. There

---

[581] [587] [1] A man that has married once is considered to have had his share of the available women of the *barrio*. Second marriages, especially with girls who have never married before, are not well thought of. It is common, then, that second marriages occur across *barrio* lines. A man finds it easier to cope with the antagonism of the other *barrio* men (who are expected, in any case, to be antagonistic) than with the bachelors and neighbors in his own *barrio*, where he has to face the antagonism in every day interaction.

621 [575] were the Daughters of Holy Mary and the Daughters of Guadalupe.

[574] Visits to households in the other *barrio* are rare, and when they do occur they are due to unusual circumstances and are accompanied by formal etiquette. A long discussion was observed in Aguacatenango when the members of a household were debating the "correctness" of going to a house in the other *barrio* to buy milk for a very sick man. Two days later, the anthropologist was present in the house of the cow owners when the wife of the sick man arrived and asked to buy the milk. The senior woman of the house denied that her cow had any. When the visitor left, it was explained that "milk is money, the *Ladino* schoolteacher pays better for it, and besides . . . the woman came from the other *barrio*. . . ." When the *Ayuntamiento* authorities call the household heads to contribute with communal labor and/or discuss village affairs, it is usual that one *barrio* will send many and the other *barrio* relatively fewer delegates, depending on which one is more affected by the outcome of the activities involved.

621 423 The only important difference between the *barrio* organizations of Amatenango and Aguacatenango is their relation with the land tenure system. In Amatenango, the *barrio* lands are not separate. In Aguacatenango, although the *barrios* are not land-holding units in the strict sense of possessing separate titles of ownership, rights of usufruct of the village communal and irrigated lands are held separately by the two *barrios*, the people of

G21
423
[312]

each _barrio_ prolonging their cornfields towards "their side." Aguacatenango irrigated land is divided and allocated so that men from one _barrio_ have their plots separate from men from the other _barrio_, the _barrio_ plots being watered by separate canals.

The same way that the community as a whole holds exclusive titles of ownership and rights of usufruct against other communities, the _barrio_ has a monopoly of certain town lands, over which it holds, if not ownership titles, rights to plant their crops, gather palms for the roofs of the houses and _espino_ for the fences.

In 1956, a group of men from one _barrio_ bought land from a nearby _finca_ (ranch). A month later, the other _barrio_ bought land from another _finca_ owner. The meetings which planned the purchases were closed and maintained in semi-secrecy. There was some conflict over the rights of the "other _barrio_" to use the pastures included in the new lands of the other, and gossip on the subject lasted almost two years, revealing, once more, the traditional separation between the two village factions.

That the _barrio_ as a land-holding unit is more significant in Aguacatenango should not be a surprise: Aguacatenango is much more dependent on land for its subsistence, since agriculture is the only large-scale productive enterprise of the community. Therefore, conflict and competition for land tends to acquire greater proportions than in Amatenango where people have other important sources of income. One of the ways in which possible conflicts between village factions over land and its products is handled, is by delimiting the territorial rights held by the people who belong to such factions.

8: Hunt E-4,5 (1958)1962 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango
Aguacatenango

CHAPTER IV

THE ORGANIZATION OF PRODUCTION

Introduction

128 Up to this page we have been describing the communities of Amatenango and Aguacatenango, emphasizing the similarities between these two social universes. There is, however, a set of differences between the two which requires separate treatment. It is important to do so because a detailed analysis of the patterned variation in the two villages can show us how, within a very similar social and cultural background, two societies can develop alternative forms of behavior which place the relations between individuals in two contrasting social structures.

Aguacatenango

241
462
592
[621]

Aguacatenango is purely an agricultural village. The whole community is organized into independent domestic groups which are, in a sense, small family farms administered by the males.

Men cultivate the field crops--corn, beans and squash--do other planting and agricultural work, and care for the large livestock with the help of the sons who live under the same roof. Each household has a male head who is the bread-winner; he is responsible for the welfare of those who live in the same *sitio*.

241 then, each season is a question mark, an equally unpredictable
433 year of plenty or a lean year.

184 In Amatenango, when the crop fails or is poor, the income
323 241 of the villagers can be compensated by producing more pottery.
433 434 This is obviously not so in Aguacatenango. If hunger threatens
184 the families, the result is a higher migration rate or an increase
166 in the number of men leaving town to work part-time in the fincas.
464 731 The result of having an alternative form of income within the
184 homestead in Amatenango is that the village keeps its income more
434 balanced year after year, and that the village as a whole has a
621 reputation of being richer than the other communities.

184 In Aguacatenango, the women are an economic burden. The
434 men are very aware that they themselves "do all the work." Women
462 562 have long and leisurely afternoons which are spent sitting on
their porches grooming, chatting, or visiting. Men complain of
this, saying "Women cannot realize how hard a man has to work.
They complain of not having this or that, but they do not know.
. . . ." In Amatenango, on the contrary, women are important producers, men and women sharing, equally, the responsibility of supporting their families.

Thus, in the one case, Aguacatenango, the work of women has a marginal, undeterminate value in an economic milieu in which they have no cultural alternatives to convert their labor into goods or subsistence necessities; in the other case, Amatenango, the labor input of women represents about half of the total productive efforts of the villagers.

883 (gang), containing males from the age of about twelve to the time
562 they marry. They usually sleep together in one of the *escuadrilla*
573 member's house corridor, and spend long nights playing the harmonica, having corn eating competitions or serenading.

562 885 A man is not considered a full-fledged community member
851 until he marries and has a child (the word for man and father
601 have the same root: *tat*), which allows him to take the lower
•621 post in the government (*policía*). The government itself is an
621 age-graded organization in which the kinship terms of elder and
561 younger brother are used reciprocally, and by extension, by of-
601 ficers in lower and higher posts.

562 With the passing of time, both men and women increase their
593 621 status by raising a family and by passing to higher positions in
794 the civil-religious hierarchy. Although women do not participate directly in the government, they have some duties as officer's wives (e.g., ironing the Saint's clothes if their husbands are *Mayordomos*), and they are called by their husband's titles. A man may resign from office if his wife dies and there is no other adult woman in the household who can take care of her part of the officer's performance.

184 The first noticeable difference in the ordering of social
562 relations in Aguacatenango and Amatenango is the position of women
592 in the domestic group.

184 In Aguacatenango, the eldest male is the head of the
562 household. He controls the land which the men of the household
462 work, the cattle, the labor of the household members and most of
592 the money obtained through the sale of surplus corn (which is

593 583 584 The boy obtains a wife with his father's help. He has usually selected the girl himself, but his father makes the arrangements with the girl's parents and pays the bride-price. The bride-price, called the bocado (mouthful), is paid to the household of the future bride and has a fixed value, 300 pesos, given in the form of consumable goods: chocolate, sugar, bread, coffee, cigarettes and trago (the local brew).[1]

585 183 593 606 At the marriage ceremony, the new wife and husband are instructed in the rights and duties of their new role. The young wife is told, in a formal speech given by an elder man of the

---

[1] The regular marriage negotiations include several visits to the girl's parents called the pedidas (requests), which can be [585] spread over a period of six months to a year. The last pedida is considered the engagement ceremony, and after that comes the entrega de la muchacha (the giving away of the bride) which is the ceremony referred to here as the marriage ceremony. This ceremony follows the native custom. There are two other marriage ceremonies which can be performed, and are optative. One is the civil marriage at the Ayuntamiento, selected by very few because it is considered an unnecessary expense, although it gives some prestige. The other is a Church wedding, performed by the Catholic priest. This wedding ceremony does not occur until the couple have been married several years and have children. Church weddings are considered to be strong bonds, which are very difficult to break up. In many cases, if a couple is fighting a lot and the wife threatens to leave the homestead, the husband will try to marry her in the Church to force her to stay in the household. Because of its high prestige value, if a boy is rejected by the family of his sweetheart at the pedida, the suitor's family will offer as an extra attraction a Church wedding immediately after the entrega de la muchacha.

In some cases, when the suitor is rejected by the parents of the girl, or if he cannot afford the bride-price but the girl is willing to live with him, the marriage ceremony is not performed. In these cases, the institution of the robo (the stealing of the girl) is common practice. The suitor arranges with his girl-friend to run away together at night, and go to his home. Therefore, robos or huidas occur with the consent of the groom's parents, who have to accept the girl into the home. The robo is [621] common in inter-barrio marriages, where the pedidas ritual is socially impossible to carry on, because the limitations put upon barrio interaction and the rules of barrio endogamy.

593 156 • 621 [583] Aguacatecos expect a man to take the responsibility of setting up his son in "business" as a community member. He pays for his son's bride, teaches him the skills for tilling the soil in order to earn a living, and provides him, at a prudential time, with the means of production: a parcel of land, and perhaps a few animals, and a house where he can live with his wife and children.

593 888 At the same time, a son is expected to take care of his parents when they are old and the father retires from agricultural work because he is too old, sick or weak to do, by himself, all the work necessary for the maintenance of his household as an economically independent unit. The people say that a son should provide for his aged parents because: "Did we not give them everything?"

The primary responsibility for the care of aged parents is usually given to one son in particular, preferably the last one (po'h). [428] The villagers explain that this is his duty, because "if he stays with us when all our other sons marry, get their land and leave, this house will be for him, he will inherit this place." Thus, the villager visualizes his dependency on the last son as an economic exchange between kinsmen: he receives from his son food and shelter, he gives him a house lot and house. The duties of a son toward his parents are expressed both in the kinship idiom

---

[592] [591] [606] the separate cooking fire, is the symbol of the unity of one single domestic group. When two couples live within the sitio without dividing it, people are very careful to explain if they still cook together or not, and if they cultivate the land separately or not.

592 but it is always built around a core of agnatically related men;
593 a father and his sons, united in their common interest in the
patrimonial land and the fruits of their joint cooperative labor.
To this core of men are attached their children and their wives,
all of whom are dependent on them for their food supply, shelter,
and the satisfaction of most other needs.

621 When a couple moves outside the parental home, the house
591 site that they are given should be contiguous if possible, or as
592 close as there is a place available, to the husband's father's
602 homestead. Thus, ideally, the town should be settled by clusters
of domestic groups forming localized agnatic lines, each containing a man, his parents, his brothers and his married male sons.
At the same time, one would find out that women, because they
follow their husbands, live much further apart from their agnatic
relatives than men do.

593 After a man moves from his father's household, he is not
591
476 expected to work the same parcels with his father, but they do
241 share some work in common. Usually (I don't have the exact num-
417 ber of cases, but enough information to suggest that this is the
mode), a man and his sons have contiguous *milpas* that are fenced
together. The fences, which are laboriously built and repaired,
are the communal job of all the men, and save them the time and
effort of building interior separations between the plots, because
the purpose of fencing is to keep cattle from invading the parcels
and without fences it is useless to risk planting.

423 This does not mean that the land is held jointly. Each man
241
417

183
591 The preceding figures, when combined with the figures of compounds, show that the patrilocal norms are followed in practice in 95 per cent of all cases (see Tables 8 and 9), while only 64 per cent of the women live with the same degree of proximity to their parents.

The difference in proximity for men and women is not accidental, but statistically significant at the 0.001 level of confidence. This also shows that the community, as expected, is divided into localized clusters of households of agnatically related men. Even the 64 per cent is an inflated figure, since a man tends to marry a woman who lives close to his parental home, following the proverbial adage of "marrying the girl next door." 621 592 602 [582]

183
591

Alternative Norms of Uxorilocal Residence

The percentage of men who do not conform to the patrilocal norm are not exceptions to a rule, but illustrate alternatives available under a flexible pattern. The instances of uxorilocal residence do not depend on arbitrary individual choice, but are socially sanctioned and few in number.

591 A man will go to live with his wife's parents, or live in a house given to him by her father, for the following reasons which everybody in the village knows:

1. When a man is an orphan, that is, when his parents are dead and there is nobody in his family to replace the father as economic mentor and jural authority, a man does not have a household to bring his wife to live in nor a relative to work with and who will give him a house lot. In this case, a man, upon marrying, will move to his wife's parent's compound. He will then work the [806]

591
606
land with his father-in-law, and, at the time that the couple is ready to live separately, his father-in-law will provide a house for him and his wife.

•621
591

TABLE 9

AGUACATENANGO RESIDENCE: PROXIMITY TO PARENTAL HOME. ALL MARRIED INDIVIDUALS

	Living In	Men				Women			
		Cases	Per Cent	Accumulative Per Cent		Cases	Per Cent	Accumulative Per Cent	
I	Same or adjacent compound	40	69	95	100	15	42	64	86
II	Same block	10	17			3	8		
III	Adjacent block	5	9			5	14		
IV	Same town division	3	5	5		8	22	22	
V	Different division	. .	. .	. .		3	8	14	
VI	Other town	. .	. .			2	6		
	Total Sample	58	100			36	100	100	

	+	-
Men	55	3
Women	23	13

I to III = Patrilocal Proximity
I to IV = Barrio Endogamy
I to V = Town Endogamy
VI = Town Exogamy

$x^2 = 12.6, > 10.827$ significance level at 0.001

593
592 loses his labor and some of its land holdings, while if a daughter
464 leaves, the loss of labor is marginal, there is no loss of land,
562 and her removal is not a drain on the resources of the household,
423 nor does it upset its basic economy.

591 The multiple bonds between a father and a son over the
593 patrimonial land of the family, the products of their joint effort,
182 and their common responsibility for setting up the standard
of living for the homestead, all foster patrilocality.

423 A young man could, today, obtain land without his father's
425 direct help. He cannot obtain irrigated land (because it is extremely
592
621 scarce, and privately "owned" by the household heads),
[593] but he could obtain land in the communal lands of the village.
This, of course, is not the better land, being *temporal* and far away from the village. Although the *temporal* land close to town is not privately owned, it is "earmarked" for use by the heads of each household. That is, the communal lands are distributed to households, not by titles of ownership, but by usufruct rights. Even if he decides to take such a step, he needs (1) the approval of the *Ayuntamiento* which oversees the distribution of usufruct rights for the community as a whole, and (2) the recruitment of other men to help him clean and fence the parcel.

621 Neither of the two alternatives is easy to carry out in
593 practice. First, if the *Ayuntamiento* grants land to a man against
423
425 his father's will, this creates a problem of jurisdiction between
578 the jural rights of the household head and the administrative
rights of the *Ayuntamiento*. We could not predict what consequences such a case would have, because we have no evidence that it has ever occurred (of course, this is based on the case

593
578 histories collected during the field work season, and it well
•[621] could be that a case was missed). Second, if he wants to obtain
[423] help from other men, they risk antagonizing, with their willingness
[476] to cooperate, the head of the household in which the young man is residing, and they also risk the concommitant sanctions.

423 The young man could also obtain land without his father's
425 help by leaving the community to work for wages and saving enough
464 money to buy land. Although the selling of parcels is not a
166
[593] common practice in Aguacatenango, the idea of land being a commodity that can be bought and sold has been introduced, and some few household heads, in cases of emergency, are willing to sell. Of course, leaving the community to work for wages means voluntary exile for a man and alienation from relatives, friends and the cultural milieu. Also, men insist that it is profitable to work for wages only if one does it for short periods of time and keeps milpa simultaneously. Wage work alone is not enough to buy corn and the other necessities to meet the requirements of the customary standard of living.

593 On the other hand, a man breaking away from his home and
621 refusing to accept his father's authority becomes a deviant, and
156 antagonizes not only his family, but the community.

593 Although it is possible, theoretically, to become eco-
592 nomically independent of one's father against his will, in fact
156 a man can only set up his own household in compliance with the ethical principles and moral conventions of his culture. Therefore, he is only permitted to form his own domestic group when he has demonstrated that he has reached the stage of social maturity which allows him to do so.

593
592 But a man wants to become independent of his father. While
885 he is living within his parent's compound he is considered by the
621 community to be "a child." He is bound to work his father's land and cannot control the produce of his own labor. Until he sets up his own separate domestic group, and becomes economically independent, he does not have full rights to participation in the political life of the community because (1) he is bound to make political decisions following his father's, and he has no voice in most community affairs which are the concern of household heads, and because (2) he cannot materially afford to take up the expenses of officership.

562 Women are also usually anxious to set up their own sep-
592 arate domestic group and independent housekeeping because this
885 gives them some autonomy which they cannot achieve otherwise. The
606 bond between a daughter-in-law and a mother-in-law is not expected to be a strong one. We have already discussed how the two women are assumed to be somewhat antagonistic, and their common work of housekeeping is unequally distributed.

While women live in the same compound with their mother-in-law, they have no power to make decisions of their own about their working schedule, their housekeeping, or the food stored by the elder because this is under the control of the elder woman.

[574] A woman cannot freely take time to visit her mother because she is expected to keep her social life within the boundaries of
[313] her husband's domestic unit. She cannot even go to gather firewood, which is an activity highly enjoyed by women. Except for getting water from the well or pipes in the street or gathering firewood, a woman has few chances to go out of the compound.

8: Hunt E-4,5 (1958)1962 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango .
Aguacatenango

CHAPTER VII

CORPORATE GROUPS WITHIN THE VILLAGE

174
Historical Perspective

611 It is probable that the communities of Amatenango and
591 Aguacatenango had, at some time in their past, a patrilineal or-
601 583 ganization based on agnatic descent, patri-virilocality, a kinship
423 terminology of the Normal Omaha type, and other associated features
422 such as bride-price, groom service, patrilineal control of the
rights to land usufruct, and patrilineal inheritance.

174 Each agnatic descent group formed segments of a corporate
613 lineage, and several segments formed a sib. Lineages were local-
614 • 621 ized, and they had important social functions. The heads of linear
626 segments formed the local government and had the responsibility of
controlling conflict and sanctioning individual behavior through
the supernatural. They were believed to "own" powerful animal
counterparts of their souls, which patrolled the village during
sleep, and punished the misdemeanors of those men belonging to
their line of descent. It is also probable that the lineage was
[582] an exogamous unit, and there is some scanty evidence which points
to the practice of cross-cousin marriage.

127 The evidence to support this hypothetical statement is of two types. On the one hand, there is some historical documentation in published, as well as manuscript, form. On the other hand,

571 and outside the household by the bilateral group of kinsmen of
each particular Ego and his or her spouse, which because of the
residence pattern, live localized within a neighborhood.

602 In Aguacatenango, on the contrary, most important activi-
592 ties are carried on mainly by agnatically related kin. This, of
562 course, does not mean that matri-kin or affinals are absolutely
excluded. But in making decisions for giving or receiving help
in work, for example, agnatic kin are preferred, especially for
men, because women tend to collaborate mostly with the agnatic kin
of their husbands. The reason for this is that activities for
women are not determined in terms of the kinship lines, but in
terms of household membership: they collaborate with the closest
kin of the household in which they reside, and not their own
closest kin. A household contributes labor and interacts more
often with agnatically linked households than any other.

361 The reason for this difference in emphasis could be said
602 to be a result of the fact that one collaborates more with the
592 people who live the closest. After all, the neighborhood in
Aguacatenango tends to be a cluster of agnatically related house-
[114] holds. Nash felt that in Amatenango, "because of propinquity
alone certain (kinship) relations are emphasized over others"
(Nash, J., 1960:130). We disagree with this statement.

323 In Amatenango, pottery making and corn agriculture are the
241 two principal productive enterprises which affect the organization
433 of the domestic group, including the residence choices, so it is
182 not strange that the neighborhood group (or residence clusters
591 within the barrio), made up according to the criteria of selecting
592
621

323 241 producers for the particular domestic groups, seems to be the
433 originator of bilateral increase in interaction, while it could
182 be equally well said that the bilaterally settled neighborhood in
591 592 Amatenango is a result of the selection of household personnel
621 along both males' and females' kinsmen lines.

114 J. Nash (1960) interpreted the bilaterality of Amatenango
602 182 as being a result of the residence pattern. Nash assumes that
361 kinship and territoriality are two mutually exclusive principles of association, while in reality they are not so. On the one hand, if territoriality (or the spatial placement of the individual in the household) is determined by kinship alignments, both would tend to be symmetrical; on the other hand, even if they are not mutually inclusive (which in this case they are), both are emphasized simultaneously in the same set of choices, so that the principles of spatial proximity and kinship proximity, although independent variables, are concomitant in their effects. Moreover, Nash found out that activities which did not involve immediate reciprocity followed the kinship line exclusively without reference to territorial propinquity.

121 The danger of assuming that "because of propinquity alone certain (kinship) relationships are emphasized over others" (Nash, J., 1960:130) becomes evident in a larger theoretical context. If residential propinquity tends to set up interaction along bilateral lines, the opposite, residential dispersion, would tend to emphasize interaction among unilineal relatives. Then, all lineally organized societies ought to be organized in exogamous settlements, or in a dispersed hamlet pattern, and all large concentrations of

121 population, such as an endogamous village, ought to be bilateral societies. This is obviously not so. Even if we assume that our statement is a reductio ad absurdum of Nash's point, there is evidence in the immediate vicinity of Amatenango that other villages, equally concentrated in population, with the same physical set-
114 ting, are not bilateral. J. Nash (1960) compared Amatenango and
361 Aguacatenango in a few paragraphs, and she felt that the evidence
602
592 supported her theory. However, the data available to her was
591 very unreliable. She quoted a preliminary report of Metzger written before the residence analysis of the community was carried to completion, which contained only impressionistic observations, and gave the impression that residence was neolocal and that agnatically related households were widely spread within the community, which we have shown in chapter vi not to be true.

602 Moreover, Aguacatenango not only has patri-virilocality,
613
592 but corporate patrilines. The name-groups in Aguacatenango form
551 localized agnatic descent groups (which we above called the
621 localized clusters of agnatically linked households). The people belonging to a name-group are recognized as relatives or, in Tzeltal, "those who are my family on my father's side." Those individuals have one last name (Indian surname) in common with
174 Ego. Within the Spanish surname, some people are considered in
613 the descent group and some are considered aparte (separate),
551 but a man of the Spanish name Perez, would say that all those Perezetik who are not aparte belong to his family, and any Perez is "closer" to another Perez than to a man of another Spanish name. The reason for the segmentation of the Spanish name-group is lost in the past. When the lineage system was composed of

613
476 The patrilines function in several dimensions. Work
[602] groups, although invariably containing some bilateral and affinal
relatives, recruit members mainly among agnatic kinsmen. Men
fence their fields with the help of their brothers, father and
sons; when villagers get together to buy a cow for a town fiesta
celebration, each cow is bought by a group which contains agnat-
613 ically related men. In one case, seventeen men who bought a cow
•621 together belonged to four patrilines which were neighbors among
476
[432] themselves. In another case, in which several men got together to
build a house, nine were agnatic kinsmen, three were affinals
(the son's wife's brother, the daughter's husband and the wife's
brother), three were compadres and one a neighbor from across the
[462] street. The women who prepared the meal for the housewarming
were: nine agnatically related to the household head; two
agnatically related to the wife of the household head; three
affinals of the household head; two affinals of the wife; and two
neighbors. In another case, a man and his two sons, one of whom
was living in a separate domestic group, helped in the construction, and several other men were contracted to help with the payment, although the daughter's husband, who was a carpenter, was
called in to give advice and help.

613 Individuals, in time of trouble, seek advice from the
476 elders of the patriline, which is the largest unit in which kin-
626 ship solidarity functions as a controlling social force outside
627 the domestic group. The patriline also exercises control in the
form of moral pressure: gossip, accusations of witchcraft, and
responsibility for vengeance when a patriline member has been

000 423 621 592 178 precisely stated. Today, with the total increase in land holdings, the influence of the Ejido Commission (however minimal) and the introduction of a money economy in which land is becoming more and more of a commodity that can be bought and sold, in terms of contract transactions, land tends to be thought of as individual household property. [593] There have been several cases in which brothers have bought land from each other, although they are the people from which a line member can expect to obtain land, or in the absence of it, the necessary help to clear and fence a new parcel in forested communal territory.

178 613 593 423 Other reasons for the constant breaking of linearity, which reduced the patriline to a very shallow group, are inherent in the system itself. First, the antagonism between brothers over property rights tends to make the sibling group weak, and agnatic lines split in each generation.

593 [592] Insofar as siblings occupy an equivalent position with respect to the elders in the household, their sentiments towards one another are easy and affectionate, but insofar as the elder sibling has jural authority over the younger ones, the relationship is marked by constraint, respect and a certain ambivalence.

Thus, siblings are expected to love each other, to give each other company, to help when necessary, and to share, in some aspects of their life, a common position with respect to the community at large, or what Homans calls the external system (1950: 90-94).

The equivalence of siblings, especially those of the same sex, is evident in many observations. A man whose brother is

177
178 lineage (which exists today in many other communities such as
754 Oxchuc), has disappeared. Without the basic belief in the supernatural
776
613 controlling powers of the lineage heads, the ritual activities performed by the lineage as a corporation became meaningless, and fell out of use.

592
613 Finally, from an economic point of view, the large patriline
434 household-compound, as a productive unit, is unfunctional, and the
421 characteristic form of the domestic group is now the nuclear house-
578 hold, which also contributes to the weakening of patriline strength. Within the nuclear household, it is difficult for its members to discriminate between the part of the household income that is derived from the household head in his capacity as a worker and that which is from his unmarried sons; between those profits which are derived from the household head as a capitalist who has provided tools and implements, and finally those which come from his capacity as "owner" of land. In a larger household, differences in labor in-put, rivalry between the women about the food controlled by themselves and belonging to their husbands, or between the men about the property rights of the produce derived from their
592 common effort, tend to create conflict and disunity. In the
594 nuclear household, the division of labor is explicit, the role ex-
578 actly and minimally distributed, and conflict, in the case of its occurrence, is likely to be more quickly solved because the fission of the nuclear domestic group is equivalent to the disappearance of the household itself.

178
613 The functions before performed by the lineage are now
592 performed by the household, the community, or by the neighborhood
621
591
184

178 613 592 621 591 184

group, composed in Amatenango of bilateral relatives, and in Aguacatenango, mainly of agnatic kinsmen, but also including some affinals and non-related people, because contiguous household-to-household localization is an ideal not always realized (we have discussed previously how in some few cases a son lives in a house given to him by his father, but one block distant from his father's own compound).

178 184 591 562 613

The result of this complex set of variables is that the lineage has lost, in Aguacatenango, some of its characteristic functions. The Amatenango case, to extend the example, shows how, even when (1) patri-virilocality disappears (as a consequence of the women participating actively in the economy), and (2) the status of the sexes with regard to inheritance and rights over property becomes equal, the lineage disappears leaving only small traces of its previous presence: name groups without meaning or function.

184

591
586 the father is preferred, while in Amatenango, both paternal and
602 maternal relatives are equally good choices.

184 9. In Aguacatenango, where widows are incapable of sup-
736 porting the economic demands of the household by themselves, they
591
434 choose to reside with a male sponsor in another household, while
in Amatenango, they can be self-sponsors and the heads of their own
domestic groups.

184 10. In both villages, residence within one's barrio is
621 preferred over residence in any other territorial division. In
582,
591 Amatenango, cross-barrio marriages are accompanied by matri-
uxorilocal residence as well as patri-virilocal residence, which
results in both men and women residing in a barrio other than their
own (11 per cent and 16 per cent respectively). This results in
Aguacatenango barrios being related only through the circulation
of women between them, while in Amatenango, both men and women are
transmitted between families across barrio lines, in both directions.

184 The structuring of economic and residential sponsorship
621
602 produces two different types of neighborhoods in the two villages.
[592] In Aguacatenango, the neighborhood tends to be a cluster of ag-
natically linked households, while in Amatenango, it is composed
[613] of a set of kindred. The barrio in Aguacatenango, then, is a
[562] territorial division containing neighborhoods which are localized
agnatic groups, which I call localized patrilines, with few non-
relatives and bilateral kinsmen enclaved throughout the blocks; a
man does not separate from his territory or barrio, nor from his
184 neighborhood, while a woman circulates within neighborhoods after
621 marriage and even within barrios. In Amatenango, both men and
591

184
621 women tend to stay within the neighborhood in which they are born,
591 or, equally, cross territorial lines at marriage.

121 To be able to derive these simple rules of residence, we
591 had to take into account some aspects of sponsorship which Fischer did not include in his typology. First, Fischer makes the error of assuming that people make residence choices mainly in terms of kinship, and within kinship, in terms of lineage and lineage sponsors.

We have shown that people make residence choices in terms of both kinship links and economic interdependence, and that among kinsmen, unilinearity is not necessarily the basic criterion for
121 choice. Although Fischer's typology can be very useful in analyzing
128 groups in which linearity is strong, such as Aguacatenango, it
602 tends to obscure the analysis of more bilateral groups such as Amatenango.

128
602 To make up for this bias in the taxonomy, we had to add
591 three separate criteria for sponsorship: (1) the sex of the
562
561 sponsor, independently of his lineage affiliation; (2) the generation
571 of the sponsor; (3) the economic role of the sponsor, independently of his or her sex, and independently of his or her kinship connection with the person being sponsored.

184 At any given time, an individual in Aguacatenango or
591
592 Amatenango resides in one and only one household, and derives his rights of membership in the unit through kinship or marriage, depending on the importance of his position as a laborer. While in Aguacatenango men derive their membership, as a rule, through descent and women after marriage only through affinality, in

184 591 592 Amatenango both men and women derive their rights to reside in particular homesteads through both marriage or birth, as alternate choices.

592 591 571 181 602 The economic system in itself is not an independent variable. Given its present shape, decisions about where to live, changes in the composition of the domestic group at crucial points in its development, and the strength of emotional ties between individuals are influenced by it. Most choices which concern the structuring of internal relations within the domestic unit are expressed by the cultural carriers as economic and kinship choices simultaneously, or in other words, as economic choices made within the framework offered by the kinship structure of the domestic unit.

Other factors, however, seem to perform no less important functions. Among these other factors, we have mentioned the following in separate parts of the previous text: (1) the position of the person within the kinship group which forms the core of the household; (2) the number of men and women residing in the unit; (3) the age of the household membership; (4) the temperament and attitudes of the household members with respect to each other; (5) the aspirations of the individual, in terms of the achievement of status, the insurance of positive affection and the need for psychological rewards; and (6) the laws of group interaction.

571 592 621 In order of intensity, the economic domain affects (1) the individual's status within the family; (2) the membership and organization of the domestic group, both in terms of residence choices and the distribution of authority within the unit; (3) the

571 592 [621] developmental cycle of the domestic group; (4) the relations of households within a neighborhood and within the more inclusive kinship groups; (5) the relative strength of the patriline versus the bilateral group; (6) the functions of the larger territorial endogamous divisions or barrios; and (7) the total community. [184] Except for the importance of barrio land tenure in Aguacatenango, and general higher wealth of Amatenango as a whole, the system of production does not seem to affect the structuring of relationships at a level higher than the household and the particular type of rights and duties of members of the extended family of each village.

184 562 The position of women for the village at large is very similar in the two communities. Except for the fact that Amatenango women have the economic power and the legal right to take cases to the Ayuntamiento on their own, neither the women of Aguacatenango nor of Amatenango has rights to political officership, nor to roles outside the domestic domain, which, once more, confirms the anthropological truth that whatever the descent system, or the economic organization, jural authority is ultimately vested in the hands of the males of a society.

182 571 602 Economic factors are not the only factors affecting the interpersonal relations of the villagers. The economic structure is a given historical and cultural fact. Many choices of behavior, which are economic choices in their immediate context, are not so in terms of the long range view of the system. First, the kinship system seems to limit the range of economic alternatives for the individual, independently of the fact that choices

9: Nash

NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Tzo?ontahal

621

[For the function of various socio-political officials in civil inauguration ceremonies in Tzo?ontahal, see category 116, pp. 213-223, 224-B, 226-B, 227-237, and 244-245.]